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CHRISTIANITY
AFTER THE WAR

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CHRISTIANITY AFTER THE WAR

BY
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'Why does not God Intervene?' 'Does Faith Need Reasons?' 'Why Not Modern Unbelief?' 'Britain Justified,' 'Plain Truths versus German Lies,' 'The Mistakes of Pacifism'*

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PREFACE

WHEN so much is being poured forth upon one theme, in so many ways, it savours of presumption to add to the stream. Yet a modest contribution may be of value where dogmatic attempt at finality would rightly be scorned. After the War there will have to be some settlement of many things, great and small. All that the following pages essay is to suggest the main lines on which the greatest issues will be most worthily and hopefully compassed. And if purity of motive, along with sincerity of purpose, are not in themselves sufficient to procure attention from the indifferent, or fair hearing from the critical, it may yet be urged as an entirely valid reason for what here follows, that in the religious world, as plainly as in the political, the people of these realms are even yet only partly awake to the gravity of the situation.

Thus as to the War, the most influential journal in the land deliberately affirms that even now, after all the tragic horrors of the last eighteen months—

There are still considerable sections of people in this country who regard the War as a thing that does not intimately concern them, and who hold their own petty affairs more urgent than the need of carrying it on with the utmost vigour of which we are capable.

Possibly not even the deliberate and official confirmation of the ghastly atrocities of the German hordes in Belgium, Poland, and Serbia, and the abominable murder in cold blood of nearly two thousand innocent people on the *Falaba*, *Lusitania*, and *Persia*, will bring them to their senses.

If it be so, the religious world offers only too real a parallel. Neither Church officials nor Church members, and certainly

not those 'adherents' who shrink from membership, are awake to the seriousness of the Christian outlook. Speaking from the Christian standpoint, one can but hope that the coming conflict will awaken them, even as an earthquake arouses from their languor the dreamy dwellers in warmer zones. For the religious conflict is coming, as surely as the political and social. Concerning these latter, it is not our task here to say much, save incidentally. But as to Christian things, the notion, which did at first obtain no small hold, that through the overwhelming tragedy of this frightful War, a new spiritual life was going at once and permanently to flood the country, has already proved itself to be a delusion. There was a wave of strong national emotion, undoubtedly; and some of its overflowings found their way into the Churches. For a while it seemed as if the long-looked-for tide of 'revival' was coming in. It did indeed rise, with varying degrees of promise. But all tides have ebbings as well as risings, and this has been no exception. The ebb has set in already. The real Christian question of the hour is not nearly so much, if at all, how many hallelujahs shall be sung over spiritual triumphs, as how shall the waning of enthusiasms which at least made for the holy, be arrested? In what way can provision be made for the creation and development of new Christian life-forces which shall emerge when Armageddon is past, and only wax stronger as the century advances?

At present it is simply not true that there is a 'great spiritual awakening,' in the Christian sense. We may let pass—though with a *caveat*—the customary assertion that nineteenth-century materialism is dead. If philosophical materialism be dead, it has left a very practical heritage, which affords no small comfort to those who mourn its decease. In the very midst of the welter of blood and woe inseparable from numberless deadly conflicts in trenches, and bombardments by murderous artillery, we see myriads rushing together for seaside enjoyments, hundreds waiting in long queues outside our theatres and picture palaces, thousands flocking to the races to disport themselves with bookmakers; whilst military leaders and politicians, burdened with direful responsibilities, plead pathetically for such supplies of ammunition as will alone shorten the conflict. Even our semi-crusade against alcohol,

in which we have followed haltingly the example of Russia and France, was undertaken not on moral or spiritual or even scientific grounds, but because it is a physical hindrance. It is only during the War that the greatest plague of civilization is to be stayed! And even now its abolition is opposed by a leading Dean in the Anglican Church! There is to be, apparently, and one fears undoubtedly, unless something happens to the contrary, an alcoholic 'Mafeking'—what not a few of those who are now fighting abroad and waiting at home will term a 'general bust up'—when once the tide of blood is stayed.

Of course, like the Germans, all the Allies are sure of victory. But how, or when, no man ventures to predict. All we know, at the moment, is that the awful carnage is by no means past. A new Balkan and Egyptian plan of campaign is being arranged, which means that thousands more of our noblest sons, brothers, husbands, fathers, have yet to be 'mowed down.' But when the hell-born horror does at last come to an end, then the fate of Europe, as indeed of the whole modern world, will be cast into the crucible. With what result? The fashion of the hour is to decry 'pessimism' as a cruel and unworthy delusion. Maybe. But an unconditional optimism is even worse. These pages are sent forth in humble endeavour to point out the only optimism which can be justified in face of facts.

Whether accepted or challenged, the hope of the future here expressed turns upon two conditions.

(1) In spite of Nietzsche, Treitschke, Bernhardi, Harden, Dernburg, Tirpitz, and the rest, along with the Kaiser's distorted Theism as abetted by theological Professors at German Universities, all that is happening points to real Christianity as the only way of escape from this miserable chaos, to national and international health and happiness.

(2) But such Christianity requires to be both understood and practised, as it never yet has been.

Tolstoy, for all his excellences, was doubly wrong. He based his Christianity on two main principles, both of which were unwarranted. Christ did not teach the principle of absolute non-resistance, in its crass Tolstoyan literalness. It is necessary to say this with all possible emphasis, both because of

PREFACE

the unwarranted fanaticism of some believers, and the insolent dogmatism of some unbelievers. Of the latter, instances will be found in the following pages. The former is, I think, both fairly and fully met in my booklet on *The Mistakes of Pacifism* (C. H. Kelly). Christ's whole life, character, teaching, and self-sacrifice, stood for the resistance of evil to the uttermost. The 'good' by which it is to be overcome does not consist in the intensity of pietistic, or ascetic, or fanatic individuality, but in such keeping of the two Great Commands as makes each of them the complement and stimulant of the other. In other words, Christ's Christianity bids us 'abhor that which is evil,' not acquiesce in it; and the manner of the abhorrence, if we are, as He would have us be, 'wise as serpents,' has to be determined by the manner and the occasion of the evil.

Again, the Christianity which is true to Him does not say—as an all-sufficient ideal and maxim—'The kingdom of God is within you,' for such a kingdom, in a world like this, is neither desirable nor possible. He who has no scope, no intention, to keep the Second Great Command, assuredly can never keep the First! Even as John so firmly declared—'If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar.'

The true summary of warning, comfort, duty, help, and hope, for which on Christian lines this hour of stress and strain is calling, may well be found in the Master's own words, when they are rightly apprehended:—

Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered, It is not coming as a flash that you should watch for, neither will it be something about which men may exclaim 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' for, all the time, the kingdom of God is in your very midst.

That is at once a final answer to the whole tribe of Millenarian Dawners; a word of wisdom to the politicians of every nation; a solemn warning to Laodicean Christians. But it is also the utmost stimulus conceivable to all those who, seeing Christ's Kingdom coming, surely if slowly, day by day, and recognizing that as the only 'Second Coming' with which they

are really concerned, find the greatest comfort in their sorrows and relief to their perplexities, in helping its progress by means of all they have and are.

Some minds may desire apology for the repetition of certain references in the following pages, under different sections. The reply can only be that it is partly intentional and partly inevitable.

F. B.

SHEFFIELD,

February, 1916.

φίλῃ ἀγαπητῇ,
συνεργῇ—
M. W. H.

CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
PREFACE	5
I. THE PRESENT SITUATION	13
II. WHAT THE WAR HAS DONE AND IS DOING	40
III. THE REAL CHRISTIAN PROBLEM	86
IV. THE PROSPECTIVE CALL FOR CHRISTIAN IMPROVEMENT.	96
V. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPMENT	117
VI. EPILOGUE	150

I

THE PRESENT SITUATION

Whilst these words are being written, the War is far from over. No one whose opinion is worth noticing ventures to say when it will be. Every one hopes, though with fear and trembling, that Viscount French is right in his forecast that it will not be a protracted war. Already the crop of booklets as to what must come 'after the War' has begun to appear. It is not by any means too soon to face that prospect. Much more has happened these last six months than any living man is able to grasp. Indeed, it seems probable that before the enormity of the issues at stake has really come home to the mind of the nation, the still more critical period which cannot but follow will be upon us. The difficulties, anxieties, tragedies, of the present conflict are harrowing enough. But the closure of such a titanic struggle will be even more difficult than its maintenance. All the nations of Europe, we may be sure, will be at uttermost tension to guard their own interests. Still more will all the Allies, at the very least, be determined that such a bloody sacrifice shall not again be demanded of them in the name of 'kultur.' Whatever persistent Pacifists may say, facts show beyond contradiction that Germany has behaved as a wild beast. The first and absolutely necessary thing to do with a mad dog is to prevent its further power to harm. That, in some way, and at any cost, is what *must* be done with the nation which has been represented in this frightful struggle by names which, from the Kaiser downwards, are only too familiar now to the Allies. Nor is that all, by any means.

If we may venture to hope that the residual good in Germany will hereafter so work as to gradually eliminate the conceit, brutal militarism, and state tyranny, which have led up to

a mania for lying, with savage 'frightfulness' unparalleled in history and loathed by modern civilization, restraint alone will not suffice. Nearly half a century ago Mr. Gladstone said :—

The greatest triumph of our time will be the enthronement of the idea of public right as the governing idea of European politics.

All that such an ideal involves need not here be specified. But, as Mr. Asquith has pointed out, it must at least mean, in general,

the substitution of force, for the clash of competing ambition, for groupings and alliances and a precarious equipose, the substitution for all these things of a real European partnership, based on the recognition of equal rights and enforced by a common will.

Such an ideal seems as yet to be far distant, but it has to come somehow, if Europe is to be saved from another such hellish outburst as the present. Just now we are straining every nerve to make sure of the Allied victory. For the moment this is all. But only for the moment. A comparative few of the simpler sort may imagine that the peace to come will settle all difficulties and end all sorrows. Such childishness is mercifully as rare as mischievous. Wise men know that 'peace' will only mean entry upon another kind of war. We shall escape Scylla, only to run risk of being wrecked on Charybdis.

The safest commonplace is that all things will be altered. No one can foretell how much, or in what way. But it is sure that the *status quo* will return no more. Count Hermann Keyserling has not exaggerated when—in the *Hibbert Journal*—he asserts that—

This War will change the world to such an extent that all judgements based on memories, even the most recent, will prove untrue.

When Mr. Asquith affirms that the idea of public right for which we are contending at such awful cost must mean the definite repudiation of militarism, along with the independent existence and free development of the smaller nationalities, by means of a real European partnership, we accept it as an all-inclusive minimum. It is in very deed a *multum-in-parvo* summary. For it manifestly and necessarily includes not only all international relations, but all national interests. It embraces not merely the whole political world, but all social problems. And the social outlook is absolutely inseparable from the religious. The prospect is overwhelming in its bewildering enormity and complication. It cannot be otherwise. There is no question that it is the most colossal conflict in the world's history which is now being waged. The consequences, amid a crowd of sixteen hundred millions of human beings, ever increasing, in a world which becomes year by year more cosmopolitan, must be correspondingly incalculable. For such consequences, however, in all realms of life, we now have to prepare.

No one doubts that a storm clears the air. But a tornado does more. It is no mild beneficent storm which has been and yet is sweeping over Europe. It has been an infernal tornado, wrecking, smashing, devastating, ruining, in all directions. France, no less pitifully than Belgium, Poland, Serbia, bears witness to the devilish ferocity of Prussian military methods. The names of Louvain, Rheims, Senlis, Dinant, Aerschot, Liège, Termonde, Haelen, Malines, Maubeuge, will go down to history, along with a tragic host of unknown villages, to Germany's eternal shame, as exhibitions of the savagery which underlay their vaunted 'kultur.' The diabolical cruelty with which thousands of innocent non-combatants, old men, women, and children alike, were slaughtered, their maidens outraged, their homes looted and then burned, whilst their property was sent by the cowardly robbers in military carts to Germany, passes all possibility of adequate comment. No printed illustrations or descriptions can do justice to the devastation wrought in all directions by these emissaries of 'frightfulness,' under the direct command of the Kaiser and the war-crew around

him. If ever during the two millenniums since their utterance, the words of Jeremiah had application, of a truth it is here.

Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord, and shall not My soul be avenged on such a nation as this ?

The fulfilment of such a solemn condemnation has yet to come to pass.

Meanwhile Belgium, Poland, Serbia, are, in Apostolic language, ' cast down but not destroyed.' In their anguish they are measurelessly greater and nobler than the brute nation which has for the moment crushed them. From the ashes of Belgium's ruined cities and villages there will yet arise a people worthy of their ancient traditions, and inspired with loftier aims than the selfish conceits of Germany have ever imagined. From the fires of her affliction she will emerge purified and inspired. Every one possessed of any sense of justice and heart of sympathy hopes that it will be the same with Serbia and Poland, after all the tribulation which they also have endured.

A few main features of the tragedy loom out large before our sad and indignant vision. Belgium will be restored beyond doubt. Sooner or later—God grant sooner—the robbers and murderers will be driven back to their lairs, and so far as is possible be compelled to make restitution to the very uttermost. But some losses are irreparable. We know that too well. Even when reparation is enforced as it ought to be, a restored Belgium will mean fearful cost, as well as unmeasured determination. The old Belgium is gone for ever. The Rheims, Louvain, Liège of old, will be seen no more. Indeed, the Europe of old is gone for ever. Whatever difficulties may accompany the settlement of terms of peace, this we know, that the doom of Prussian militarism as the European Minotaur has been pronounced. The absurd conceit of the motto ' Deutschland über alles '—in its ultimate expression—has disgusted the whole modern world.

At the present moment, Germany is the amazement, the scorn, the curse of civilization. In spite of all the clever lying with which the greater part of the German nation and

all neutrals who choose to be credulous are being deceived, the war-lords around the Kaiser know well that their main cause is lost. Their original intentions are utterly frustrated. The crushing might of their long-prepared military machine—with which they thought in swift resistlessness to smash France, maim Russia, and then enslave England—has disastrously failed. With brute callousness the Kaiser has flung to death myriads of his best subjects, the very flower of his army, in vain endeavour to crush France's heroes, and to exterminate French's 'contemptible little army.' His first wild attempt to dash madly into France was reduced to costly failure by the heroism of the little nation he had promised to respect, but thought now to sweep out of his way. His other hordes, with their Austrian allies, even under the idolized Von Hindenburg—the very incarnation of Germany's ideal of brute force—have met their match, to an amazing extent, at the hands of the Russian 'barbarians.' After long beguiling and bribing, German statecraft has succeeded in wheedling Turkey into an alliance which will only make a cat's-paw of that rotten government, and cast it scorched out of Europe. All this, and much more to their chagrin, the German war-lords know. But as human life is nothing to them, they are yet determined to do all the evil they can, with a view to 'obtaining better terms of peace' presently. So there is yet more horror of bloodshed and savagery to be faced by the Allies, and in that Akeldama this country must yet keep its place. But the end is sure. The German braggings as to what they will do with their 'victory,' and how they will spend huge war indemnities wrenched from France and Britain, may be treated with the contempt they merit. Calmly and without rancour, but with invincible determination, the Allies are agreed together that there shall be no thought of peace until the braggart invader is driven back whence he came, and a final stop put to the cursed Prussian militarism which has been at last compelled to unmask itself as the enemy of the human race. That great end must and will be attained, let the cost be what it may. The unfaltering mood and growing strength of the Allies are such that it is not too soon to ask, with unmistakable seriousness, what will follow when peace is so settled as to set the nations free

from any nightmare horror of another calamity like that which burst upon Europe in August, 1914.

Full well we know that our statesmen, who have so nobly watched over the interests of this country during these crucial months, will do their utmost to see that justice and liberty are secured in all directions. But their labours are not now our concern. There is no lack of pleaders or of pleas in the realms of politics, economics, sociology, and philanthropy. We may leave all these for other occasions. Diplomacy must go on, however much democratized, to deal with international relationships. The one realm which they will not touch is that which must here have most attention, viz. religion. The comparatively few who would dismiss this factor in human character and life may be left to their own devices. They neither represent the nation during times of peace, nor the armies actually engaged in war. Although this is not, happily, in any strict sense a religious war, yet religion is an unmistakable and inextinguishable element in all the armies on either side. How deeply religious is the concern felt by each nation for those who represent it on the battle-fields, needs no declaring. By religion we must be content here to understand Christianity. No one who has watched events questions for a moment the sincerity, the loyalty, the gallantry, of our Moslem allies. But the relations between Christianity and Islam may, for the moment be left to theologians. This country, at all events, is not a Moslem country, and is called a Christian country. Apart from the Church 'as by law established,' Christianity is the faith of the overwhelming majority of those who in these realms give any definite heed at all to religion.

No question can be of greater import, or fraught with more far-reaching issues, than what will be the influence of this tremendous European international convulsion on the belief and practice of Christian doctrines throughout the world. Many and various indeed are the prognostications already put forth. Some appear to think that Christianity is in danger of sharing the fate of Belgium, and being reduced to ruins by the shock of such a fearful conflict of nations. Probably, in all such cases, the wish is father to the thought. It does not deserve discussion. There is no real analogy

whatever between the condition of the poor little country which lies bleeding now as the result of German savagery, and that Christian faith which, in however many varying forms and degrees, is held by a greater number of human beings than any other. It has often been the object of opposition as brutal and callous as that which, during these latter months, has vented its spleen on noble cathedrals and harmless little country shrines throughout Belgium. But it has only emerged from such a furnace of affliction, as we know the ruined edifices will, purified and enlarged. The pagan bombardment of churches by the Kaiser's hordes will do nothing to destroy and not a little to stimulate the Christian devotion which they represented.

But it is altogether another matter to inquire what form such stimulus will take. The Christian faith, after all, whether on Greek or Roman or Protestant lines, is but part of that whole modern world which, as hinted above, must suffer vast changes in the course of the unmeasured and resistless upheavals of this the greatest war in history. Earthquakes, we know, are but the results of strains past bearing in the crust of the globe. The ruin which accompanies them is but a natural result of the inevitable crushing. It were strange indeed if something analogous to such destruction did not occur in the world of religion, when we consider all that the present European tragedy involves. All the nations engaged in this work of slaughter are more or less avowedly Christian. France may be difficult to estimate, but its religious status must certainly not be estimated from the godlessness which is sometimes flaunted by unbelievers as the normal condition of its city centres, particularly Paris. Belgium is frankly Romanist. Russia glories in attachment to the Greek Church. This land is avowedly Protestant. Germany is boastfully Lutheran, and makes loudest claims to be Christian in its whole present attitude. Yet these pronouncedly Christian nations are all spending their utmost strength in horrible internecine conflict. Well may an impartial observer say, 'If this be Christianity, the world of humanity would benefit by its annihilation.'

The reply which may be so easily and swiftly made, that this is not Christianity, is, however, not easy either to establish

or defend. It has been abundantly shown elsewhere¹ that Germany is, beyond all honest contradiction, ultimately responsible for the awful struggle still in process. Yet Germany ever vaunts its adhesion to the Christian faith. The Kaiser, more than any other monarch, past or present, claims God, in the Christian sense, as an ally. So that, from his standpoint, we have to contemplate the spectacle of the Christian God as the partner in ruthless abominations of cruelty which throw the ordinary horrors of war into the shade, accompanied by wholesale lying, as a natural consequent after the violation of solemn treaty obligations, and associated with such virulent and venomous hate, on the part of the whole German nation for this country, as has never before been equalled on such a scale, but arises almost necessarily from the falsehoods which the Government of that land has everywhere disseminated. If, then, the religious half of Germany be warranted in its profession of such Christian faith, there can be small wonder that the other half is irreligious. Even if it be bitterly anti-Christian, there would seem to be no small reason for such an attitude. Moreover, it must be granted that, in general, this whole murderous conflict is a sorry object-lesson to the non-Christian world.

But if the estimate above formed of the German share in it be true—and that judgement is here carefully and deliberately affirmed—then the Christianity which it so loudly boasts must inevitably come under the severest condemnation. It is either genuine or spurious. If the former, then the religion which condones or supports such devilries calls aloud for universal execration. Voltaire's '*Ecrasez l'infâme*' would therein find valid application. But if the latter, then whatever wise and necessary changes the coming peace may bring to pass in national territories or diplomacy, politics, or social relationships, nothing in all human affairs will need such drastic reform as religion. Such Christianity as the German nation has exhibited will have to be either ended or mended.

It were, of course, worse than vain to assume or pretend that Germany alone is thus travestying Christianity to mankind.

¹ See *Britain Justified*, by the present writer, at the close of which a list of books is appended which, with many others, sufficiently support its main contention.

We in this country may give thanks with solid grounds of reason in facts which cannot be controverted, that no such sins can truthfully be laid to our charge as to the Prussian statecraft which has become the watchword of Germany. We do not claim for our statesmen that they are more than men. But they are men who deserve the name, for their adherence to truth and honour. They have not scorned international treaties as 'scraps of paper.' They have not deliberately deceived other Foreign Offices. They have not consented to cruel breaches of faith, under the infernal plea that 'might makes right.' Our armies have not been stealthily long-prepared instruments of determined aggression. They have fought as all armies have to do in actual battle, but they have not violated all rules of honourable warfare. They have not behaved as wild beasts in the wholesale destruction of sacred places, in the abominable slaughter of thousands of innocent civilians, in damnable outrages upon women and children. So far as war can be mercifully waged, i.e. religiously, we have done it.

But as to truly representing and actually embodying Christianity in daily life, that is altogether another matter. In plain speech, this we have not done. One of the most cultured and fair-minded of Christian advocates—examining chaplain to a bishop—has recently said, in the course of an earnest plea for the Christianizing of our social life :—

It cannot, I think, be questioned that the striking contrast between the lives of Christians and the rules which they profess to accept is the great religious difficulty of the present day. The attitude of the people to the Churches to-day is not determined by higher criticism or questions of ceremonial, but by the unsatisfactory lives of professing Christians.

That unflinching estimate is all too true. But it is not the whole truth. There is an intellectual and spiritual as well as practical side to the situation. To quote once more from the same source :—

Not only the Church but Christianity itself, and all supernatural religion, are called in question, or dismissed

as not worth calling in question. On the one hand, we have a comparatively small force of active and articulate hostility, which has its value as a stimulus to closer thought and work, more energetic work. On the other, we are oppressed by the dead weight of spiritual inertia, a widespread and profound indifference to dogma as the guide and motive of action.¹

There are, therefore, two aspects of our main theme—Christianity after the War—which must most definitely be considered. Christian doctrine and Christian practice are both alike challenged by the age in which we live. Both have been cast into the fiery crucible of the present War, and, along with other customs and traditions of civilization, melted into indefiniteness and uncertainty. Into whatever varied forms the molten issues will presently flow, there will have to be, and will be, to an extent no man can yet measure, 'a new heaven and a new earth,' i.e. new ideals of spiritual truth, and new adaptations of them to the world in which we live. At the present moment we seem to be sure of nothing. Not even whether the part taken by our nation in the dire conflict is Christian—whether Christian churches should bless it or condemn it. The majority, certainly, of those who show any regard for the Christian religion are firmly persuaded that this is a righteous war, and that the stand taken by our Empire is as Christian as was that of Luther before the Diet of Worms—'Here I stand; I can do no other, God help me.' To any impartial mind which has made an equal study of the New Testament and of human nature, as well as of actual facts in modern Europe, it would seem that no other attitude was possible.

Yet we are made conscious of the existence of another religious party, calling themselves 'Pacifists.' These exhibit all the usual audacity of the minority, in denouncing not only all war in general, but this War in particular, as being, equally on both contending sides, unchristian and immoral. Some of them go even to the extreme of insisting, as a practical policy, that if we were but Christian indeed, we should offer

¹ *Bampton Lectures for 1907*, by J. H. F. Peile, pp. 6, 18.

no resistance whatever to anything that Germany might choose to demand, or to inflict upon the population of these islands. If these modern Huns chose—as judging from recent history it is certain they would choose¹—to invade our shores and perpetrate in our midst all the damnable outrages which they have executed with such fiendish thoroughness in Belgium, we should all simply submit to it, saying—‘The will of the Lord be done.’

It will, however, be assumed here that this question has been sufficiently discussed elsewhere.² The conclusions arrived at by Mr. J. Lloyd Thomas would seem to express the whole Christian case herein as truly as succinctly:—

With a full sense of the gravity of what I am saying, I assert that the doctrine of non-resistance, when advocated as of universal and unconditional application, is an anti-social, immoral, and unchristian doctrine. The fact that it works in some instances, and works with extraordinary and complete success, is no reason for shutting our eyes to its disastrous futility in other

¹ How real is this certainty may unfortunately be learned now equally from the attitude of the Kaiser and of his subjects. In Count Axel von Schwering’s account of his conversations with the Kaiser, in July last, we find him representing his master as saying—‘I do not wish for war, but I will not go a single step towards preventing its breaking out. I will await it without flinching, and should I find myself entangled in it, then indeed will I make it without mercy and without remorse, sparing no one and nothing, destroying all that I cannot take.’

Echoing their ruler’s spirit, and urged on by the lies of their government-controlled press, the people’s venomous hatred of England can find no sufficient expression. Herr Lissauer’s ‘Song of Hate’ is all too feeble to express what they mean by the daily salutation now adopted—‘Gott strafe England.’ Frau Ida Boy-Ed, wife of one of the principal German propagandists in America, appeals to them to share in ‘the gigantic, everlasting, inextinguishable hatred of Germans for England.’ And Lieut.-Colonel Kaden speaks for hosts of others—‘You teachers, to whom millions of German children look up with eyes and hearts, teach hate, unquenchable hate. You fathers, proclaim it aloud over the billowing fields throughout the countryside, hate, hate the accursed English, hate.’

² As in the present writer’s *Britain Justified*, and still more specifically in the following:—*The Immorality of Non-resistance*, from which, p. 64, the following quotation is taken. Also Oxford University pamphlets—*How Can War Ever Be Right?* by Professor Gilbert Murray; *War Against War*, by A. D. Lindsay; *All for a Scrap of Paper*, by Joseph Hocking; and Canon Streeter on *War, This War, and the Sermon on the Mount*. Papers for war-time published by Oxford University Press.

instances. It is not of universal application. There are innumerable crises where it fails and fails pitifully. Christ never meant it to be of universal application in an imperfect and unregenerate world. Though we admire the heroism and love the spirit of many of those who hold this doctrine to be of absolute and universal validity, we must not shrink from the painful duty of saying that their moral teaching in this particular, were it actually put in practice to-day, would plunge all that civilization has won, through centuries of sacrifice and agony and travail, down into the black night of crime and lust and devilry.¹

So speaks one competent Christian witness. And Canon Streeter echoes his words :—

The subjugation of Belgium or the crushing of France does not merely mean some alteration of boundaries

¹ These words may be commended to the readers of the *Clarion*, who, as these pages are passing through the press, are informed by the Editor in his usual style that—‘The Pacifist claims that it is unchristian to defend ourselves against evil, and he is absolutely right’; that—‘Most honest and sensible men, be they freethinkers or be they Christians, are agreed that the Jesus of the Scriptures taught non-resistance’; that—‘When we take up arms in our defence, we deny our professed faith in the wisdom, power, and justice of God’; that—‘When the British entered the world-war, they ceased to be Christian nations.’ The falsity of these dogmatisms is well shown by Mr. Thomas, and is disproved in detail in my booklet *The Mistakes of Pacifism* (Kelly). But their self-sufficient pseudo-finality is very effective amongst many who do not know better. To such writers neither plain reply nor demonstrated self-contradiction makes any difference. The avowal that, in this War, ‘we are no longer Christians, we are men,’ is, of course, mere effrontery which needs no reply. But his modest declaration that ‘all profession of a belief in a heavenly Father is cant’ has long ago been completely answered, in my *Clarion Fallacies*. Whilst his further statement that—‘Of the eleven nations engaged in this horrible War, nine are Christian nations’—is most effectively dealt with in his own words. For in *God and My Neighbour* he specially tells the people of this country—‘You are professing Christians, but I see nothing of Christ in your institutions or in your daily lives,’ and adds that ‘it is very evident that our social, political, and national affairs are being run on anti-Christian lines.’ So whenever it suits his ceaseless purpose to vilify Christianity, Britain may be either black or white, just as the occasion demands. It is to himself, therefore, more than to any other, that his own words apply—‘When men profess to believe that which they do not believe, we call such profession cant, *cant*.’

on a paper map ; the happiness of millions for generations to come is at stake. Such phrases cover an outrage to humanity and a calamity for civilization. If so, to resist is essentially a Christian act ; and if effective resistance is only possible through war, war, with all its horrors and iniquities, becomes a Christian duty.¹

The summary of the present situation, which we here assume to be both definitely Christian, and the key-note of all that follows, may be expressed in three statements.

(1) As a general abstract principle, Christianity is utterly and for ever opposed to war. Its fundamental assumptions, the Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of men, can never concede that might is right, or that brute force can be the true or God-intended arbiter when human differences arise. 'If only we were all Christians' well said, not long since, one of the most bitter opponents of Christianity in this country, 'there would be no fear of war.'

(2) But in the present stage of humanity's spiritual evolution, evil abounds on all sides. And as it is Christianity's main purpose, its very *raison d'être*, to 'save' men, so is it an inalienable function of Christian faith and practice to resist evil in every form and by all means. 'Abhor that which is evil' is one of its most unmistakable and abiding standing orders. 'Overcome evil with good' can never, so long as we are rational beings, dealing rationally with our Christian records, be interpreted to mean, 'Let evil-disposed men do as they like.' Christ did not die, as some Pacifists have asserted, to demonstrate the universal and unconditional principle of non-resistance. That were to make Calvary simply an everlasting premium upon crime. The Kingdom of Heaven for which He gave Himself to death was and is one, as He said, in which physical force could be of no avail. But it affords no analogy whatever against a defensive war, waged on behalf of right, and truth, and honour, and compassion for others. Judgement upon His murderers was, as He Himself warned them, only postponed, and the fearfully resistless onslaught of the Roman legions around Jerusalem was but the fulfilment of that divine sentence.

¹ *War, This War, and the Sermon on the Mount*, p. 14.

(3) The evil which has to be resisted, and which has made this war inevitable, arises and finds such horrible scope because the nations are not Christian. Ultimately the case stands just where it did nineteen centuries ago.

Whence come wars, and whence come fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your pleasures that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not; ye kill, and covet, and cannot obtain; ye fight and war; ye have not, because ye ask not.¹

If the modern mind prefers it in other than scriptural language, the statement of Sir Oliver Lodge will suffice:—

What is sin?

It is the deliberate and wilful act of a free agent who sees the better and chooses the worse, and thereby acts injuriously to himself and others. The root sin is selfishness, whereby needless trouble and pain are inflicted on others; when fully developed, it involves moral suicide.²

When selfishness is incarnate in a nation, the consequences of evil are correspondingly aggravated. That this is what has taken place during the last half-century in Germany, is patent to all who are not beguiled by the lying glamour of its press under government control. It would be all too easy to trace back the poisonous working of the 'lust' that James speaks of, in the nation's blood, to the wild rush of 1870, which seemed to enrich the conquerors at such trifling cost. In reality it was the victor who was vanquished, after the fashion of Mr. Wells' Martians, who by sheer force and cunning overthrew all terrestrial opposition, only to be themselves reduced to ruin by infinitesimal bacteria. Such punitive recompense certainly takes time. But it is as sure as slow. It is now coming to pass in Germany, thanks to the influences of Bismarck, Chamberlain, Nietzsche, Treitschke, Bernhardi, and their fellow workers of the Pan-German

¹ Jas. iv. 1, 2.

² *Substance of Faith Allied with Science*, p. 52.

League—with all the rest too well known now to need specifying.¹

Every week now it becomes more manifest that, with the exception only of the feeble parties in the enemy Alliance—Austro-Hungary, Turkey, and Bulgaria—all the world desires to see Germany humbled, if not crushed. Nor is the reason far to seek. It has been voiced hundreds of times by the press of that misguided country so unequivocally, that a few specimens will be truly representative of all. Thus speaks Professor von Leyden, of the Berlin University, in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*:—

Germany must and will stand alone. The Germans are the salt of the earth; they will fulfil their destiny, which is to rule the world and to control other nations for the benefit of mankind.

Such a lunatic utterance on the part of an individual would only call for a strait-jacket. It seems incredible that such mad conceit can ever possess the soul of a nation. Unfortunately, there is only too real evidence to hand that it is so. Not only has Herr Dernburg, one of the shameless American propagandists, the impudence to seek to sanctify wholesale robbery and murder by asserting that geographically Belgium belongs to Germany, because it commands the mouth of Germany's principal river, but the still more shameless Count von Reventlow informs the world, in the *Berlin Tageszeitung*, that—

Germans will do much more than persevere. They will fight until everything complies with their will, a will that vehemently and without scruple puts all means

¹ The best conception of the general attitude of the ruling powers in all phases of life in Germany during the last quarter of a century will probably be obtained by an intelligent perusal of Mr. F. W. Wile's instructive volume entitled *Men Around the Kaiser—the Makers of Modern Germany*, in which are given more than thirty brief but suggestive biographical sketches of those leading characters whose combined influence, over as well as under the Kaiser, have brought things to their present pass. For a fair and reliable, as well as succinct, statement of the whole condition of things in modern Germany, no better book can be recommended than *The Soul of Germany*, by Dr. F. Smith, himself Professor of English for twelve years at Erlangen.

into its service by which it desires to arrive at its aim. Any termination of the War, except by German victory, is unthinkable.

It is small wonder that modern Europe, and indeed the world, should tinge its scorn with anger at such fulsome rodomontade as this.

As regards this country in particular, Professor von Leyden leaves us in no uncertainty as to our fate :—

No self-respecting German will ever consent to remain in any room of which an Englishman is the occupant. If the German cannot eject the Englishman, he will himself leave the room. We cannot be expected to breathe the same polluted air as our deadliest foes. There can be no compromise upon this point.

We have to swear a national vendetta against the English never to cease our preparations for another war, never to spare an effort until the last semblance of English power is destroyed ; and there will be no rest or repose for any honest German till the British Empire has been swept into the oblivion of past history.

Such utterances have at least the merit of lucidity. They have all the vigour of the ravings of delirium, and supply overwhelming evidence why such national madness must, for the sake of our common humanity, somehow be stopped, and made to be as harmless as it is already pitiful.

But how? That is just now the question of questions. A patched-up peace, with such a mania raging in the heart of a powerful nation, would be worse than madness. It would simply mean more slaughter and devilry than ever, by anticipation. It pleases some opponents of the Christian faith to proclaim that—

The terms of peace will be drawn up by Russia, France, Belgium, Serbia, and Britain. They will not be dictated by any one man, nor by any one people. They will not be based upon the principles of Christianity, but upon principles of justice and human reason.

The mendacious impudence of this latter clause is patent enough to every unbiased reader of the New Testament, and is sufficiently dismissed by calling to mind the apostle's words :—

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be anything noble or praiseworthy about them, take these things into account.¹

Nor is there any need of quotation to prove that the New Testament does but make incandescent the all-embracing summary of the prophet Micah :—

He hath showed thee, O man, what is good ; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God ?²

When certain small sneers of unbelief are dismissed to the oblivion they merit, the question still remains, boldly facing our statesmen, Cabinet Ministers, and politicians, as to how such ideals as those of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Asquith are going to be attained. It is as easy as it is convincing to urge what has been quoted above, viz. that—

The greatest triumph of our time will be the enthronement of public right as the governing idea of European politics.

But what is the use of such a declaration, when the nation which has created for its own purposes the mightiest war-machine the world has ever seen, openly avows such a conception of ' public right ' as von Reventlow's, given above ? Bernhardt the first—as distinct from Bernhardt the second, who, now that Germany is going under, makes his mealy-mouthed appeals to America on the ground of Germany's

¹ Phil. iv. 8.

² Micah vi. 8.

perpetual pining for peace and gentleness—has left us no room to doubt what his country's conception of 'public right' is in regard to France, the nearest neighbour :—

In one way or another we must square our account with France, if we wish for a free hand in our international policy. This is the first and foremost condition of a sound German policy ; and since the hostility of France once and for all cannot be removed by peaceful overtures, the matter must be settled by force of arms. France must be so completely crushed that she can never again come across our path.

This meek and neighbourly ideal may well be put alongside that expressed above in regard to England. What public right in regard to Belgium has meant, the modern world has learned with unutterable indignation. That Russia, if only Germany could compass it, would fare no better, is well known, and may be expressed with significant brevity in the words of Frau Ida Boy-Ed, the popular German novelist, when she asks :—

What is the Russian people ? A stupid, fanatical mob.

Such, of course, could have no rights. They could only be allowed the inestimable privilege of participating in German 'kultur' ; in other words, of being ground under the heel of a brutal military despotism.

Such is the temper with which the Allies have to make terms of peace. Without claiming for them that they are immaculate, it is manifest to all but the wilfully blind that something which can scarcely be deemed less than miraculous will have to happen to the Kaiser's land, as well as on the battle-field, before peace becomes even thinkable, let alone practicable. If, for generosity's sake, we forgive him and his government—so far as we are able—their colossal selfishness, their breach of honour, their devilish cruelties, and say, as some are disposed to do, that all Europe is to blame for the present hell, it is still clear that mere superiority in fighting force on the part of the Allies will never bring about a lasting and worthy peace.

German corruption can never be ended on the battle-field. No crushing defeat, by sea or land, will convince a great nation that it has been falsely led into unworthy estimates and purposes. There is only one way in which any hope of lasting peace and future international amity can be suggested, and that is the Christian way. The 'principles of justice and human reason,' which it pleases such journals as the *Clarion* to pit against Christianity, will not suffice. It is abundantly true that Christianity insists upon both these, much more emphatically than so-called 'Rationalism' does. But it does more. It definitely urges, and seeks to bring about, that something else for lack of which in human affairs reason is too often set aside and justice scorned. In the language of Mr. G. Lowes Dickinson—himself no Christian, and therefore an impartial witness here—

Change of will, change of ideas, moral and spiritual development, that is what we want, I agree. A change of heart is therefore as necessary as a change of frontiers and allegiance.¹

That, so far as international relationships are concerned, is undoubtedly the hope of the future. How it is to be brought about may be matter for prolonged discussion. But this much is certain. The changed heart and the changed will constitute the very pith and marrow of the Christian purpose and method. All else in Christianity is subservient to that. Without such result Christianity is but as the salt that has 'lost its savour,' and 'is thenceforth only fit to be cast out, and trodden under foot of men.' That individuals, through their Christian beliefs, may be thus 'converted,' and not only experience change of heart, but prove it in change of life and character, is never called in question. That it ought to be equally true of nations, and would be, if only national Christianity were as real as in myriads of cases the faith of individual men and women has been, is no less true. The notion recently put forth by some German statesmen, that there may be one code of morals for the man and another for a nation, is itself so immoral as to merit all the scorn with which it has

¹ *After the War*, pp. 16, 37.

been received. Such ethical obliquity only occurs, like typhus fever, under bad conditions. Normally, we know that the happiness or nobility of a family means neither more nor less than the aggregate goodness of the members of that family. It is equally certain that the avowed religion and consequent character of any nation is but the sum-total of the convictions and conduct of the people who compose it. If the professed religion of each distinct nation meant really the worship and service of the true God, in spirit and in truth, that would undoubtedly ensure not only permanent peace between all the nations, but whatever else in each separate community would 'make for righteousness.' So would be brought to pass the greatest good for the greatest number. But all turns upon the reality here assumed. Readers of R. L. Stevenson's immortal story *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* will remember that the fearful tragedy with which that 'strange case' ended, resulted wholly from the fact that the actual prescription which at the outset had wrought such wonders of transformation in turning ill to good, could not be exactly repeated, and the substitute would not work. It would be difficult to find a truer analogy for the facts around us which exhibit, on such a tragic scale, the failure of the religion of Christendom. The failure is staggering; but the explanation is simple. Whatever else Christendom is, it is not Christian. There is something lacking. Did Professor Seeley, half a century ago, rightly define it?—when he said:—

That is wanting for the most part which Christ held to be all in all, viz. spontaneous warmth, free and generous devotion. That the fruits of a Christianity so hollow should be poor and sickly is not surprising.

Postponing for the moment the estimate of that judgement, it is most necessary to remind ourselves that the change so forcefully symbolized in the reversion of Mr. Hyde into Dr. Jekyll has to come about, if there is to be any hope for humanity. And this, not merely in regard to the wars between nations which so terribly exhibit the latent savagery of human nature, but quite as much—or rather even more—in all that concerns the relations of men and women to each other during

what we call 'peace.' In reality, we have not peace at all. If there were no military struggle taking place at this moment, we should still be immersed in the horrors of a worse war. To say this is not to echo the war-cry of the much-abused 'Socialist.' The true estimate of that lovely 'industrialism' of which our general modern 'kultur' is so proud may be taken from the pen of a gentle-minded, scholarly, conservative clergyman of the Anglican Church :—

We have tried Competition to the full, and it has made life into an unending struggle ; nothing so respectable as a real war, with its clear issues and definite results ; but rather like the aimless murderous bickerings of savage tribes, which give to the strong hand for a moment more than its share, at the cost of infinite material waste, suffering, and moral degradation.¹

It will be observed that the three dire consequences of the universal selfishness which unchecked competition breeds, are precisely the same as those charged upon wars in general, and upon the present European War in particular. So that the real situation which has to be faced is this. Assuming that ere long, somehow, peace between the warring nations will be arranged upon the best and wisest terms, so that there need be no sword of Damocles dangling with all war's devilries attached over the head of Europe, or of any nationality therein whether great or small, we shall but attain the liberty and incur the necessity of passing from the solution of general external conflict, to the non-solution of each nation's even greater internal problems. What we term 'social questions' were thickly enough in the air before Germany started the conflagration of 1914. Some have definitely avowed that the ominous mutterings of social difficulties pre-eminently disposed that country's ruling powers to seek relief in—what they intended to be—a repetition of the 'glorious' campaign of 1870. Be that as it may, the certainty emerges, not for Germany alone, but for every nation in Europe, that the aftermath of this titanic conflict will be not the cessation but the renewal, or the creation to an extent never before known

¹ *Bampton Lectures for 1907*, p. 97.

in the world's history, of the democratic struggle for right as against might, for justice as against charity, for fairness as against selfishness, for the wellbeing of the many as against the luxuries of the few. Every item of the complex problem programme of 'wrongs' which these ideals connote will be accentuated by what this War has done, and is yet doing, for the modern world. Well may all our statesmen, politicians, philanthropists, be anxious. It is one thing to pride ourselves on the marvellous response of the men of these realms—leaving for the moment, with all due appreciation, the Colonies out of account—to the patriotic call. We do not need Conscription—so we say. But presently it will be quite another thing to ask, What are we going to do for the great hosts who come home crowned indeed with honour, but having, in myriads of cases, little else to live upon, as they fall back into the old grooves? What, still more earnestly must it be asked, are we going to do with the equally noble myriads to whom, through wounds received on our behalf, life can never again be physically the same? The blind, the maimed, the nerve-shattered, upon whose vigour before the curse developed numberless loved ones depended—what is to become of them, and of those nearest and dearest to them? Verily the aftermath of war is black enough and bitter enough for those whom our euphemisms regard as 'comfortably provided for.' But even if all officers' widows and orphans were so placed, the widows and orphans of the majority are not. Shall we do for these by pensions all that practical sympathy can do? It remains to be seen.

Yet there are other social difficulties to face, as numberless as complex. It is not our business here to investigate the results of the return of three millions of men to that labour market which has been so inevitably disarranged during the stress of the conflict. Nor is it ours now to estimate the social significance of the surplusage of a million and half of women in these realms. But all this has to be done, along with very much more in the same directions. And it will not suffice to do as the *Clarion* and such organs suggest. 'Principles of justice and reason' are good as far as they go, but they do not go nearly far enough. It was neither of these that the 'Good Samaritan' exemplified, for the condition of the victim

called for something else. We are told that 'when he saw him he was moved with compassion for him.' There will be presently more need than ever before in the world's history for such pitifulness. Even if we leave out of account the awful, incalculable sufferings of all kinds which—especially in Germany, where the slaughter has been greatest—in all the nations concerned, must yet follow, we shall have more than enough at our very doors. There is no 'reason' in war, and there is but scant 'justice' in civilization. The victims of robbery and cruelty are numberless. For all these, as for hosts of others, there is need of compassion, sympathy, tenderest helpfulness, love. Whence are they all to come? It is as manifest that they will be unspeakably needed after the War is over, as that terms of peace should be signed 'on principles of justice and reason.' And it is no less certain that if the nations were Christian indeed, not only would every victim of cruelty and wrong be cared for as tenderly and practically as by the Good Samaritan, but there would be no more robbers to inflict wounds or break hearts, the wide world over. When the advocate of unbelief cries out that 'we are not a Christian nation,' the indictment has to go uncontradicted. But when he goes on to say:—

There never will be a Christian nation, because any nation which faithfully acted on Christian principles would cease to be a nation. I am not a Christian, and do not profess to be a Christian, and do not accept the principle of non-resistance,¹

it is enough to reply that the writer, professing to be so much better than a Christian, ought at least to have the common honesty to acknowledge that there are myriads of men and women quite as intelligent and sincere as himself who are Christians, and yet repudiate the principle of non-resistance as earnestly as he does. Most assuredly it does not follow that the Christianity which is faithful to Jesus Christ is absolutely pledged to unconditional non-resistance, because Tolstoy and Mr. Blatchford—or any others—say so.

The affirmation here made, as against the above, is that 'any

¹ *Clarion* for April 2, 1915.

nation which faithfully acted on Christian principles ' would become the noblest nation the world has ever seen. It must be confessed that this awful War shows up the failure of not only German ' kultur,' but European civilization, statesmanship, politics, science, and religion. But so far as the last-named is concerned, it is not the failure of Christianity that has to be recorded. It is that poor approximation to Christianity which we call ' Christendom ' which has once more broken down. It is profession, not reality, which has failed. All too truly is it said that ' Christianity has never yet been tried.' Partly, because some have tried, but have only half succeeded. Partly, because so many refuse to try it. It is incontrovertible that if the nations were Christian indeed, there would be war no more. What hope of the future, therefore, can be so real in promising permanent peace as the Christianizing of the world ?

To make the world Christian. The words imply a revolution so tremendous that the mere naming of it moves experience to an incredulous smile, and makes enthusiasm itself falter.¹

So says, with tragic truthfulness, our Bampton Lecturer. Yet such a revolution is the only hope for humanity. This cannot be said too plainly, or with sufficient firmness, in presence alike of all the forms of unbelief in our midst, and of rival faiths abroad. We respect the sincerity of our Moslem allies, but we also know that Islam offers no guarantee of a peaceful Europe. The good features of Buddhism cannot conceal the manifest truth that it is simply impossible for Western civilization. Bernhardt's war-cry was ' Weltmacht oder Untergang.' The Christian response is ' Christmacht or Nemesis.' Christianity or nothing is the choice, when it comes to a guarantee that wars shall cease, and that all the wrongs of peace shall be righted. So far as the former is concerned, the modern journalist says :—

Now Dr. Lyttelton, as far as I can understand him, does not think all wars wrong, does not think this War

¹ *Bampton Lectures for 1907*, p: 169.

wrong. And what he is asking is not that we shall cease to defend our Empire and our lives, but that when we are finally victorious we shall treat our enemy generously and shall trust him. That would be a very proper thing to do if we could trust him. But we all know now that we cannot trust Germany, and that if we want to make our future safe, and maintain the peace of Europe, we must not trust Germany, but must take such precautions and impose such restraint as will effectively prevent the Germans from making war again for a very long time.¹

The writer does not say how long. Would a century suffice? Is it, then, inevitable, with all our precautions, that our children in the twenty-first century must go through the same—or worse—hell of blood and agony as that which compasses us now? That is a poor hope. If it be the best hope that statesmanship can offer us, there is vast room for a better. Moreover, it is at least open to Germany to retort that she cannot trust us. As for Turkey and the Balkan States, is there anything in the verdict of history to reassure us? We know there is not. Unless, somehow, the nations do learn to trust one another, there is absolutely no hope at all of any future better than the past or present. The one and only definition of that 'somehow' is the adoption of the spirit and principles of Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, as to the social aftermath. We see and know, without any possibility of doubt, that democracy is not only coming, but come. It has not only come, but come to stay. Nor only to stay—but to rule. The old history of Rome is repeating itself before our eyes. The dominance of the Patricians is slowly but surely giving way before the growing might of the Plebeians. But what guarantee have we that the democracy which is coming to rule will rule in equity, to say no more? Truly there will be need of more. Justice and liberty are absolute essentials; but they do not by any means cover the whole ground of human need. If life is to be worth living for our children, or this world ever to become a garden of peace and gladness, free from the dread of ever-recurring shambles,

¹ *Clarion*, April 2, 1915.

many other features will have to be developed besides the 'liberty and justice' which are compatible with the brute-making Nietzschean 'will to power.' Whatever credit may be accorded to some suggestions of Nietzsche's system, the real hope of any worthy future for our race depends upon the cultivation of those virtues which he despised. Without personal purity, self-control, unselfishness, tenderness, compassion, pity, love, finding expression in mutual sympathy and genuine brotherhood, the 'superman' is but a super-beast. And despite all the cavils of unbelief, called forth too often by the failures of professing Christians, the Christian ideal remains the only one which can guarantee these noblest as well as happiest features of human character, amid the strains of readjustment which must come soon between Western civilization and the traditions of the East. If for the moment we confine our thoughts to Europe, the case has been forcefully stated thus, in view of what is before us:—

And now the day of power has dawned for the labouring classes, and with power comes danger. If they return evil for evil, and in their turn exact more than is their due; if they use their strength for oppression and injustice; if they try to outlaw the capitalist and the employer and their own uncovenanted brethren, they will not only fail of their purpose, but they will fall hopeless and unregretted like other tyrannies before them. But if they resolve to carry out the law of co-operation with justice and mercy, they have a better hope than kings and priests have ever had; they are nearer to Christ because they have been poor and despised and oppressed. But it is the Spirit of Christ alone that can bring this great work to accomplishment. Self-interest has proved itself too weak and shortsighted a motive to make men work together for good. There is nothing but a belief in the Fatherhood of God and the oneness of men with Him, and in Him, that can make us think of others and treat them as brethren, seeing our good in their good.¹

That is undoubtedly the Christian ideal and the Christian hope. The more earnestly, however, this is declared to be

¹ *Bampton Lectures for 1907*, p. 96.

the panacea of the future, the more necessary it becomes that Christianity should be both understood and practised. At present it is neither. The approximations with which we are familiar are not to be despised. They have accomplished more than can ever be calculated, for the good of our country and our race. The ceaseless cynicisms and criticisms of unbelief in regard to the attitude and influence of the churches, or of individual Christians, are all as unnecessary as they are often rancorous. For Christianity is both self-criticizing and self-healing. To that, the whole New Testament bears abundant witness. No single failure from the highest, or yielding to the lowest, can be specified by opponents, which Christianity does not itself yet more unhesitatingly condemn. But it does still more. It supplies potent motives which, if appreciated, will enable human nature both to shun the lowest and rise to the highest. The duty no less than opportunity of modern Christianity arises just here. In the great readjustment of all things which has to come at the close of the present chaos, Christianity, if it is to fulfil its divine function amongst men, has to be rid of its excrescences, purified of its errors, set free from its encumbrances, loosed from its swaddling-bands, cleared of its distortions, and brought into working harmony with its foundation principles—the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of men. The only Millennium that merits a thought is that which waits for the day when Christian believers will thus justify and apply their faith.

II

WHAT THE WAR HAS DONE AND IS DOING

It has been assumed in the preceding pages that sooner or later, be the cost what it may, the Allies will triumph. Justice will be done to the countries which have suffered, and ample reparation exacted from the guilty nation which first provoked the war, and then conducted it with such abominable methods. But that day is certainly too far off at present to permit of exactness in detail as to what will then follow. All we can wisely attempt is to mark as clearly as possible those large elements of the case which are unmistakable. Any religious forecast which is to be at all true or helpful must be based upon an honest and unflinching consideration of what has already come to pass, and is being yet further developed, through the dreadful stress which is upon us.

Without attempting to draw hard-and-fast lines, we may separately survey the political and religious effects of the present crisis, and seek to do justice alike to their dark and bright side. For such a purpose there is material enough all around us to suggest volumes. It will suffice merely to mention some fifty items, no one of which ought to be left wholly out of account. Inasmuch as it is sometimes impossible to disentangle the political, or national, and religious factors, it may be best to enumerate definitely the main elements of each.

Let us glance first at the darker side of the national and international effects, or revelations, of this fearful cataclysm.

(1) It has shown in cruel vividness the failure of civilization, in general, to maintain between neighbouring nations such a kindly spirit as would make peace perpetual and war impossible.

(2) It has made most of all emphatic the failure of Germany's

boasted 'kultur,' which—as distinct from what our language terms 'culture'—means not only the whole of what we should call advanced civilization, but all that in its most modern and educated form. It includes all that distinguishes the scholar or statesman of to-day from the savage. But it has proved itself as helpless to restrain human passions, as the web on Samson's hair was to diminish his strength in the time of testing.

(3) It has demonstrated the frightful results of national militarism, as the natural consequence of the teachings which have so thoroughly permeated Germany during the last half-century. It is as impossible as irrelevant to apportion to Nietzsche, Bismarck, Treitschke, Chamberlain, Bernhardt, the Kaiser, and others, their respective shares in moulding that country's ideals. The plain fact is that through their joint influence the State has been made absolute god of all, and militarism the means whereby its interests may everywhere and always be enforced as rights.

(4) It has revealed, in ghastly plainness, the savage potentialities which inhere in human nature, to which all this vaunted 'kultur' is but as thin veneer, broken through at once, with frightful results, in time of stress. Militarism, so far from eliminating this strain of savagery, does but cherish it during peace, and find it diabolical opportunity in the event of war.

(5) It has given occasion for the display of barbarism unworthy of savages, in the wanton destruction of places and treasures which only brutes would fail to hold sacred. The curse of the war mania has not only found exhibition in the loss—for ever irreparable—of countless human lives, but has wrought ruin in all those higher realms of religion, literature, and art which distinguish man from beast.

(6) This awful War has flooded the country with sorrow beyond all expression or estimate. In myriads of homes throughout the land, where last year there was a happy family, there is now a desolate home, a broken-hearted widow, mourning children, blighted prospects, a threatening future. Sisters are fretting for beloved brothers who will come back to them no more. Pure-hearted maidens who had learned to love, and tasted what it was to be loved, are crushed with

grief that finds no utterance. Herein Tennyson has not exaggerated :—

O what to her shall be the end,
And what to me remains of good ?
To her perpetual maidenhood,
And unto me no second friend.

Such is the gruesome wake of the curse men call ' war.'

(7) But there is more yet to reckon with. Many have returned from the scenes of blood and horror. Some of them come as healthy heroes, incomprehensible embodiments of inexplicable preservation from a thousand deaths. But others bring with them the brand of hell. Scars may indeed betoken even braver deeds than those signified by the Victoria Cross. But what of lost limbs ? What of shattered nervous systems ? What of eyes shot out of their sockets, or only left to darkness for evermore ? If there were in the universe some such malignant evil spirit as ancient theologies represented the devil to be, how he must gloat over the suffering thus needlessly, wantonly, ruthlessly, inflicted on mankind ! Even if it were agreed, for mere decency's sake, to cover up all the equally damnable and undeniable atrocities of Germany's hordes in Belgium, there is left the ordinary toll of ' honourable ' warfare, bad enough and sad enough to crush each nation's heart, even though it be already broken with bereavement.

(8) Think again of the waste which the present madness means. The man who should seize a poker and dash round his house, smashing every precious relic and useful piece of furniture, would be immediately handcuffed, or put into a padded room as a lunatic. But nations have done far worse than this, and are yet doing it. The waste of ' ammunition ' is enough in itself to cry shame upon civilization. For it all—in its unprecedented enormity during these dark months—represents both material and labour incalculable, which might, if the nations were sane, have been used for the benefit of humanity. But besides the millions upon millions of money worse squandered than if they had been flung into some ocean abyss, we have yet to reckon with the awful,

criminal, irreparable wastage of human life. And such life! If only old men and women who were comparatively 'useless' and had 'had their day' were thus swept out of existence, possibly some Malthusian utilitarian might be found who would condone the sentimental loss for the sake of the national relief. But not even such cold-blooded comfort can be found in what this frightful calamity is bringing us. These who march so bravely and even blithely down our streets, virtually saying, as the gladiators of old to the Emperor—'*morituri te salutant*'—are not only our bravest and best, but our youngest. These are they who ought, by all nature's sacredness and solemnity, to be the husbands and fathers of the future. Dare we think that the laws of heredity will be set aside to oblige the raging passions of Europe? We know well that they will not. So, for the next half-century, either the nation must be childless, or the next generation must be to a tragic extent the offspring of weak or elderly parents. Not to mention again the surplus million and a half of women, the overwhelming majority of whom ought to have been what they purely desired and nobly longed to be, beloved, betrothed, married; the cherished wives of worthy husbands, and the blessed mothers of devoted children. Can any words of earth express herein the sacrilege of war's infernal waste?

The dragons of the prime,
That tare each other in their slime,
Were mellow music matched with

the criminal idiocy of civilized humanity when war 'breaks out.'

(9) We are learning already, as a consequence which can only be called minor when compared with human bereavements and sufferings, how great is the dislocation of all useful and worthy trade. The true estimate of this may be here left wisely unattempted. It is no less real a calamity, for which in many ways the full price will have to be paid.

(10) This War is also preparing problems for statesmen and politicians which may well give pause to the cheeriest optimism. We are said to be united now, but it is quite

certain that peace, whenever it comes, will split us up again. The apparent unity is only that of a bundle of sticks tied round by some tough withe. Presently the bond will be broken, and patriotism will be scattered into party politics. The fight over terms of peace bids fair to be as strenuous, on other lines, as Ypres or Neuve Chapelle.

(11) Nor will the burdens of care which this War is bringing us end there. For the philanthropist, no less than for the statesman, hosts of problems are lying in wait. The sifting out of the deserving from the loafer and the malingerer ; the meeting of genuine needs with adequate help ; sympathetic and honourable provision for all those war-victims to whom charity would be an insult—these will bring difficulties as well as opportunities for all who desire to play the Good Samaritan, compared with which the somewhat exaggerated scare of ‘ war babies ’ is insignificant.

(12) A still greater and darker problem will probably be accentuated. The much-vexed and miserable ‘ drink question ’ cannot unfortunately be settled in this country as vodka has been dismissed in Russia, or absinthe wiped out in France. There was a bishop once—rather given to saying strong things—who avowed that he would rather see England free, even if drunk, than sober and ‘ prohibited.’ That sinister antithesis seems to be gathering war-emphasis. For in spite of the urgent pleas of those in most responsible positions both on land and sea—illustrated by pitiful scenes daily at all our great railway-stations and elsewhere—together with the anxieties of Government, and strenuous endeavours of our ablest statesmen to meet the difficulty, we seem to be at a deadlock. Whatever happens, even if ruin, death, and hell stare us in the face, there is a section of the community, it appears, that must have their beer and whisky. Although science has now demonstrated beyond cavil that alcohol is not a food but a poison, no more necessary for normal bodily health and strength than any other poison ; although Arctic explorers, facing tests of endurance far severer than any trench work, will have none of it ; although the experience of thousands through years of strain on brain and nerve has proved that all talk about its necessity is foolish falsity, yet the craze holds on. So that a man of the character-force

of Lord Charles Beresford, himself 'an abstainer, from conviction,' yet has to say at a recruiting campaign that 'he did not think the country would stand prohibition.' Whether our poor brave fellows are shot down or not; whether the war is to drag on for weary woful months or not, for want of war's necessities, men must have their drink. And 'clergymen' in high position can still be found to speak and write on behalf of a 'moderate use of alcohol.' Why not also a moderate use of sin and folly? Let newborn Russia and ennobled France reply.

Probably no one will attribute all the lack of ammunition and slowness in repairs which troubled Lord Kitchener and Sir John Jellicoe, to drinking habits alone. But whatever may now be said in regard to exhaustion or illness, the fact remains, ominous enough in its menace for the future, and made hideous in war light, that we have thousands in our midst to whom the increase in wages, which is so often alleged to be their one requirement, brings actually only thirsty laziness. Meanwhile 'vested interests,' claiming to be the nation, 'will not stand' the prohibition which alone apparently will save such moral babies from themselves. The War shows us that the poet's oft-quoted words,

For men may come, and men may go,
But I go on for ever,

are, alas, much more applicable to 'the trade' which finds its mischievous and degrading centre in the club and tap-room, than to the innocent babble of any water-brook.

(13) The national reaction after the relief of Mafeking has passed, we know, into common speech. But the mafficking which followed on the anxiety over a little Boer town, is likely to be enormously outdone by the 'rejoicings' which must follow when the immeasurable strain of the present War is relieved. Quietly indeed and out of sight, like a deadly mine, the tension from the ever-accumulating slaughter, with the insatiable demand for more, is growing. In whatever way the explosion comes, it will be enormous, and may well be destructive. It is as dangerous as an unexploded bomb.

(14) If we assume such danger passed, or if, to change the

figure, we take for granted that the nation has shot the falls of its Niagara, unwrecked, what then awaits it? Certainly not the calm of a placid lake, but rather the 'rapids' of social struggle. Even returned heroes cannot be fêted for ever. Myriads will have to turn again to work. But how, and when, and where? We will hope for the best, but assuredly the present drift of all trades into the great ocean of war supplies will call for years of utmost wisdom as well as sympathy, if myriads of those who are as honestly anxious to work as they were bravely ready to fight are to have the opportunities they deserve. This is not the place to discuss the respective merits of Competition and Socialism. But it has been made manifest in these days of stress that something higher, broader, nobler, than mere 'private enterprise' will have to be invoked, if the average man or woman is to have a chance to make life worth living.

(15) The War has shown, with unexpected vividness, how 'suffragettes' can be as genuinely patriotic as they were noisily irrepressible. Probably the community which had no sympathy for the latter, will not fail to appreciate the former. The well-meant fiasco at the Hague must not be interpreted as a sign that, in this country at all events, women are going in future to be content with the place they have occupied in days gone by. They will certainly not settle down again to the domestic round which, as in Germany, has reduced them to political, social, commercial, and even religious ciphers. It is beyond question that in every realm of civilized life, woman's old-time content with the position of the Indian squaw will disappear for ever. Side by side with men as companions, if not rivals, much rather than as inferiors in all respects save child-bearing, women will claim after this War to take a more influential place than ever heretofore. And this not merely because the recent terrific slaughter of young men has robbed thousands of them of any prospect of marriage, but because the whole trend of humanity's upward evolution is, in spite of Nietzsche's ravings, towards something nobler than the brute force of the male, as the true ideal of human nature. The 'superman' in 'shining armour' with a 'mailed fist' is no more the final type of human excellence than the small-brained though monstrous brutes that flourished in

geology's Cretaceous period. The Deinosaurus were but weak and transient enormities of flesh. As Sir E. Ray Lankester has said, 'The great carnivora were not, never have been, the masters of the earth.' They never will be, even though, in the form of bipeds, their German 'frightfulness' crushes for a while in its bleeding fangs a little harmless nation. Sir Ray Lankester's words are as apt as pertinent :—

The gorilla and the ourang are left behind as failures in the regular general advance, skulking in tropical forests, whilst man has occupied the world, discovering the beauty and worth of truth, fair-play, and loving-kindness—sources of strength other than that which Germans in their passing madness now worship.

The whole question of woman's future civil, social, religious position, cannot of course be here discussed in few words. But however much civilization—and Christianity—may shrink from an effeminate man or a masculine woman, men have as much need of the gentler wisdom which true womanhood represents, as women have a right to be regarded with a deference which is not restricted to motherhood, and treated with a respect which accounts them invaluable co-workers, not mere emotional playthings. Assuredly for the Christian, Christ, rather than Paul, is the Master to be followed herein.

(16) But whatever may grow to be the social relations of men and women, it is certain that for a long time after this plague is stayed, its financial, commercial, and domestic effects will be so felt as to make what is known as 'an honest living' increasingly difficult for myriads, and for thousands wellnigh impossible. It is not merely a question of heavier income-tax, though that will fall severely enough upon hosts who are continually struggling with genteel poverty. But no nation on earth can waste upwards of five million pounds a day, and not feel the pinch of it for generations following. The economic details of the readjustments of our foreign commerce—especially if, as some suggest, Germany be wholly excluded—must be left for other hands; here it is only pointed out how real, how serious, how far-reaching will be the fight

of life which must ensue, when once more business ceases to be a mad rush for munitions of war, and reverts to the ordinary channels of peace. Every one knows that in cases of frost-bite, it is not the freezing process that brings the pain. It is the thawing back to normal circulation which causes the agony. It will be no less true of the community.

(17) The aftermath of war cannot but affect the children. Myriads of them physically, all of them morally and spiritually, will share in the results of what is now proceeding. We shall certainly not do as fathers and teachers in Germany are exhorted to do, instil the bitterest hate we can into their plastic minds. But there is much more than a possibility that just as the wind drives down upon our brave troops the infernal poison which the German desperate 'kultur' flings into the air, so the rising generation in these realms may come to breathe an environment of painful, bitter, and revengeful memories, which will tend to create another and even worse outburst of hell before this century ends.

(18) Dragging at the heels of this titanic conflict, there will be indeed, when peace is made, three other direful dangers—the cherishing of malignant hate, the liability to a British militarism, the possibility of calamitous indifference.

It may, happily, be said with truth that our nation hitherto has neither shown nor felt anything approaching to the fuming hatred which—thanks to the wholesale lies of the Government—now permeates the whole German nation against England. Maybe if a Government and Press had lied to us as they have in that unhappy country, we should have felt much as the German women do. But the unveiling of the actual facts which is bound to come, and which will, one cannot but hope, tend to mitigate their virulence, is only too likely to have the opposite effect upon us. The more we know of the awful ferocities in Belgium, the less pardonable they become. The reckless defiance of all war's honourable conventions which can murder the wounded and shoot prisoners in cold blood;¹

¹ See Sir A. Conan Doyle's *The Story of British Prisoners*—an awful, sickening, truthful record. It is small wonder that the author should say that this 'systematic ill-usage'—and cold-blooded murder—'of our prisoners is the outrage which will linger longest in our memories. It is the most cowardly method of revenge which has ever been heard of in the intercourse of civilized people.'

can destroy whole shiploads of innocent passengers ; can adopt any means whatever, no matter how mean and dastardly and cowardly, to suffocate or poison honourable foes ; can and does treat brave men who have fallen into their hands with savage barbarities worse than brutal—these things, when they are brought home to realization in our midst, and are inseparably associated with the preposterous and contemptible German conceit which claims to dominate the world as its divinely commanded destiny, cannot but affect the men and women and children of these islands. The danger of an answering bitter and implacable hate will be great indeed. Nothing, on merely political or national lines, will stop it. Mr. Blatchford's proposed remedy professes to abjure reprisals. But what is his suggestion—'that every German man and every German thing should be shut out absolutely and henceforth from these shores'—other than reprisal of the most drastic kind? The one certainty that emerges is that such a course would only mean the growth and intensification of hatred on both sides, which sooner or later could not but find expression in a yet bloodier war.

(19) Such a development of passion would necessitate a corresponding preparation for war. That would mean, inevitably, that the militarism of Germany, against which so much is now being said, would have to be copied rather than denounced, by all the neighbouring nations, and most of all by ourselves. We have been brought to something like conscription, as it is ; but in such a case it would seem to be inevitable. At all events the present outlook which this miserable War creates is that both the Army and Navy will have to be increased rather than diminished, with all the corresponding cost and taxation. The British temperament doubtless would never submit to the military tyranny which so long has cowed the German civilian ; but the development and domination of the fighting spirit, with all that it entails, would be scarcely less a calamity for our Empire.

As these pages pass through the press a vast Government majority has decided, under the extreme necessity of the present crisis, for some form of compulsory military service. Not only is there strenuous opposition—the many limitations

attached quite prevent such a measure from deserving to be called 'conscription.' But the pressure for it is tragically significant.

(20) There is, it must be confessed, an opposite extreme which would be equally dangerous, even that of careless indifference. Such an attitude must in any case be ruinous. The difficulties here mentioned, and many others, are no mere dreams. They are stern realities, which will assuredly arise as soon as ever the guns are silenced. The deadliest danger of all is, that, after the terrible strain, the natural craving for rest should become selfish, sensuous lethargy, in which all the vast responsibilities and opportunities of the hour may be ignored. The result of such a mood could only be what occasionally happens to some huge building which is gutted by fire, but for various reasons allowed to stand a blackened ruin, helpless, useless, hopeless. It is no fancy figure. It cannot be said, even now, that the nation realizes its peril. There are only too many in our midst who are apparently beyond appeal. The lazy assurance that we shall 'muddle through' somehow, as heretofore, is preventing vast numbers from apprehending the fearful dangers of the hour. The fact that not only the fate of our Empire is at stake, but our very lives throughout this country, to say nothing of the condition of all Europe during an immeasurable future, does not move them. If such a temper should prevail when the struggle is over, the last stage of the ensuing chaos will bring more misery even than German atrocities.

But it may well be asked—Even if all these elements of danger and difficulty are true, and need to be anxiously watched, surely there is another side? Has not the horror of these times any redeeming features? Mercifully it has. We shall do well to make of them the most we can, although mere mention of them can alone be accorded here.

(21) It is something to have, even if only for a while, such a truce between political parties as permits earnest men of all shades of opinion to join in practical unanimity on our nation's behalf. That there may be wisdom in maintaining two opposing sides in politics, for purposes of government, need not be denied. But no more can it be questioned that

great hindrances to the nation's welfare, as well as unprofitable rancour, are often engendered thereby. A real political truce may well serve as the beginning of better permanent relations between those who hold differing opinions.

(22) One fact the War has brought to light as never before with such unexpected vividness that it needs no comment, viz. the marvellous solidarity of the British Empire. Canada, Australia, New Zealand, have vied with one another, according to their respective abilities, in showing practical and costly love for the mother country. The most sanguine statesman could not have ventured to predict such an outburst of loyal sympathy, whilst the actual behaviour of these brothers from afar who thus chivalrously offered themselves as helpers is beyond all praise for dauntless heroism. The British Empire is now cemented with blood, and knit with bonds that can never break.

(23) Special mention must be made of our Indian Allies, because they came from a land differently related to us. A vast country containing millions of people distinct from ourselves in almost everything, possessed by ideals quite contrary to our own, clinging tenaciously to their ancient religion, though definitely subject to the British Crown, might conceivably and blamelessly have stood aloof at such a time of stress. They might well have pleaded that the children of the East, however generally loyal, had no real interest in a purely European war. A sympathetic neutrality might have been their best, even as open revolt would have been their worst, attitude. Upon this latter we know Germany counted, amongst her many other deadly blunders. But in point of fact, the behaviour of India has been such, alike in generous practical sympathy, in enthusiastic devotion, and in actual heroism on every battle-field, that from this time forth they cannot but come into a new relation altogether. The Germans, as well as ourselves, have had reason to respect their valour. But to us they have become brothers by ties of blood, rather than subjects requiring to be firmly governed. The memories of Lucknow, Delhi, and Cawnpore are buried for ever now, in the graves of the heroes of Neuve Chapelle. If India had not trusted England, such devotion could never have so burst forth. We may hope that that trust will

henceforth become only deeper and stronger than ever as years pass on.

(24) There can be no question as to the greatness and force of the wave of patriotism which this dire War has created throughout these realms. The voluntary response of the noblest of our sons to the country's call has surpassed anything in our history. Whether it is really necessary, through the persistent malignity of the foe, to adopt some form of compulsion in order to gather in the less noble ones who ought to help but do not, may be left here an open question. It is unmeasured tragedy to see whole battalions of our finest youths marching through the streets on the way to German gas poisoning and savagery. But it is 'the only way' and the noblest way of putting some reality into the oft-hackneyed cry that 'Britons never shall be slaves,' when these beloved husbands, fathers, brothers, lovers, go to face cruel death rather than let this land be reduced to the vile slavery which would be our lot under the bloody heel of triumphant German militarism.

(25) Again; in full face of all the lies of German newspapers, and the inexplicable abuse of German University Professors and Theologians, it must be reiterated, wherever the English language is spoken, that for us this horrible struggle has not been entered on from base motives of greed or envy, but in very deed on behalf of truth, and honour, and duty, and liberty. When the history of these dreadful days is calmly written, the facts will be stronger than the brazen avowals of the German Press Bureau, or the blandishments of the American pro-German trio. It can be summed up in one truthful word. If Germany had not wanted war, and trampled on her own solemn engagement in order to win it—as she thought—by one swift smashing blow, there would have been no war. The stand of the Allies, therefore, was but the incarnation of this century's strongest emphasis upon the necessity for truth, and honour, and right, in the conduct of nations, as utterly as in the behaviour of individuals.

(26) It has become no less plain, and the consequences of the revelation must be immeasurable, that this is, in an unprecedented sense and degree, a war of ideals. It is not a mere conflict between neighbouring nations for territory or position. It is often said, but not too often, for it is true,

that the fate of Europe, as well as of our whole Empire, hangs upon the issues of this War. It is not too much to say that the course of the world's history depends upon it. All the brazen conceits of German philosophers and journalists combined cannot conceal the hideous fact that the 'kultur' for which they are fighting, if it were victorious, would mean the reversion of the Western hemisphere to slavery and savagery. All the conduct of the War on the German side has proved this up to the hilt. The instances of chivalry, nobility, candour, refinement, courtesy, during their campaign by land and sea, have been so few and far between, as to constitute the exception which only emphasizes the rule. Above all the thunder of the guns, and through all the green poison fog or 'squirts of flame' which ruthless disregard of all war's honourable conventions has enabled Germans to employ, the question looms out large and unmistakable—Shall the future bring to the nations of Europe tyranny or liberty? Shall brute force rule, or justice? Shall each man, each nation, be free to make life worth living by happy self-development, or be hammered into an iron mould under the sway of a rigid and frigid statecraft? It can be put into a sentence. We see what German conceits have done for one nation. Is that to be the fate of all the nations of Europe? Is the idiosyncrasy of every nationality to be crushed by the mailed fist into the German mould? In this War they say 'Yes,' with all their might. And with all their soul as well as strength, the Allies say—and will for ever say—'No.'

(27) Part, at least, of the gravity of the situation has dawned upon the mind of this country. There has been undoubtedly some real sobering of the nation's mind, and turning of thought to higher and deeper matters than races and cinema houses. One can but hope that some such effect of the War upon character will so increase as to pave the way for a wise and worthy development, when the problems of peace have to be considered instead of the horrors of war.

(28) This much may be pronounced certain, that never before in the world's history was war itself such an abhorrence, or the desire so intense that this outburst should be the last. The very fact that no guarantee is forthcoming that it will

be so, makes the conviction of all—except jingoes and militarists—deeper and stronger that there ought to be, and need be, war no more. Even if we overlook, for the moment, these desperate and damnable German methods which set at utter defiance all the conventions of civilized warfare, yet, owing partly to the vast numbers involved, and the efficiency of modern weapons of destruction, the wholesale carnage of these eighteen months has been enough to sicken the heart of the world for ever, evermore.

(29) In the opposite direction to such horrible slaughter has been the development of sympathy and generosity on an unprecedented scale. The sympathy has been, and is, equally tender and practical. No sooner, for instance, has the last fiendish device of the Kaiser's hordes been made known, than hundreds of thousands of respirators, to keep out the villanous fumes, are supplied by women's hands. As to the funds subscribed for the wounded and needy, the response has been nothing short of marvellous. Dreadful as is the cause of such generosity, it must be reckoned as one of the unquestionably good effects of the War that unselfishness so real and widespread should have been elicited. Maybe only through some such severe ordeal of suffering—so strange, if not perverse, is human nature—could Christ's own word, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive,' obtain an emphasis which puts to everlasting shame Nietzsche's scorn of pity. When the latter writes:—

Life is essentially appropriation, injury, conquest of the strange and weak, suppression, severity, obtrusion of its own forms, incorporation at the least, and in its mildest form, exploitation.—The weak and defective shall go to the wall, that is the first principle of our charity,

probably the world of mankind would never have seen the hideousness of such a brutal ideal, if it had not been for these object-lessons in Belgium, and Poland, and Serbia. Nor could the divineness of the Christian principle have been so seen and felt, but for the vision of the heroic sacrifice of self on the part of myriads of men, and the costly devotion of thousands of women in yielding up their loved ones to

duty, as well as in ministering to all their after needs. So even the Inferno of the present may lead on towards a Paradiso, by teaching men to

move upward, working out the beast,
And let the ape and tiger die.

(30) Finally, in the whole wide field of social, political, national, international relationships, this frightful War, by very reason of its awful destructiveness, its tremendous issues, and far-reaching complications, will prove a veritable iconoclast. Things will never again be as they have been, in this country any more than on the Continent. As there are times in the lives of some men when their whole salvation—in the fullest sense—depends upon their being enabled to break away from some dire past, and make a new start, so may it be with nations. So it has been in days gone by, and so let us hope it will be, in the Britain, the Europe, of the twentieth century. Our heroes will not have died in vain, nor our hearts have been wrung without reward, if out of the blood-soaked ashes of Louvain, Tamines, Namur, Aerschot, Senlis, Termonde, Haelen, Malines, Gelrode, and the rest of the pitiful ruins, there shall arise an ennobled Belgium, a purified France, a chastened Britain, and an utterly penitent Germany. Such a result, however, will never emerge from mere political or international relationships. The nation which can commence a war by deliberately ignoring its own solemn obligations, and do what it knows and owns to be wrong, under the plea of necessity; can then with definite intention command its hordes to commit the most damnable atrocities, in the forms of robbery, murder, rape, arson, and wanton destruction; can proceed to such vile acts of treachery as putting non-combatants, old women and young children, into the firing line as a screen; can drown in a few minutes without warning hundreds of innocent passengers in unarmed ships; can also go on to the villany of poisoning drinking-wells with arsenic and disease germs, and as a last cowardly and vile resource use its scientific knowledge to prepare and send forth with devilish ingenuity such deadly gases as bring upon men either ghastly death by torture or life-long suffering

—such a nation will no more be brought to penitence by diplomacy, than a mad dog to gentleness by poetry. The influence of Nietzsche, Treitschke, Bismarck, Chamberlain, Bernhardt, Ballin, Harden, with their accompanying host, is far too strong. The first and only thing to do with a maniac is to restrain him. As gently as may be, but really and absolutely. If reason returns, then, but not before, may other appeals be wisely made.

Meanwhile there are no grounds whatever, in fact, for assuming such abominations on the part of the Allies. They are only human, but they are sane, and are open to reason and to religion. They have had no part in the unmitigated cant and utter blasphemy of declaring in the unctuous tones of certain German Professors :—

It was from the beginning and still remains the earnest resolution of our people to wage the War with conscientious self-restraint and in the spirit of Christian charity—if now the War must be fought through, it ought to be the concern of Christians in all lands to ensure that it be fought with honourable weapons,

and then actually approve of the devilries mentioned above.

Leaving such miscreants in the hand of God, who 'is not mocked,' so that 'whatever a man sows, that will he also reap,' let us consider, more especially for this country, what are the losses and gains accruing to Christianity, from the present dreadful state of things. We will also inquire what may be expected from Christianity in the great remoulding of nations which cannot but follow after such a cataclysm.

(31) It has become quite a commonplace, especially amongst the enemies of Christian faith, that the War has been and is a proof of general Christian failure. Thus says an ex-clergyman :—

The War has wiped off the slate a few superstitions. Christianity has been shown to be useless. Most of the nations at war are organized Christians, yet they could neither prevent nor guide the warfare.¹

¹ *Clarion*.

But Mr. Dennis Hird knows, as well as the reader does, that such a sweeping statement is false. It is no more true than to say that modern chemistry has been shown to be useless because the German Huns have used it for murder ; or that modern intelligence is useless because the land is infested with spies ; or that modern medicine is useless because poor Serbia has been devastated with typhus fever. The writers of such wild words know well enough that there has never yet been a Christian nation. Whether Christians are 'organized,' or not, is irrelevant. Even in these days of deadly weapons, every commander knows that it is not the organization that gives the victory, but the quality of the men that form the battalions. It is the man behind the gun that tells. If only men and women—as Mr. Blatchford said—were Christians, of course there would be no war. To blame Christianity for the failures of those who profess it, is worse than unfair. It is dishonest. Christianity has not failed ; for the simple reason that it has never yet been tried. The hope of Europe, and the world, is that this War, by reason of its very inferno, will bring Christ's true Kingdom nearer than it has ever been before.

(32) Certainly the frightful exhibition of what a nation may come to in the madness of ambition—the self-deceit of a warped religiousness, a brutal desperation which has flung off all restraints and perpetrated atrocities of which savages would be ashamed—has shown to a shocked and indignant world how far 'kultur' is from being Christian. It must also be confessed that these gruesome months have also shown how civilization in general, as illustrated in the modern history of Europe, is tragically opposed to the spirit and ideals of Jesus Christ. Otherwise, assuredly, there would have been no war—nor would ever be.

(33) Once again, only with more fearful vividness than heretofore, this War has shown the horrible results of perverted sincerity. If charity demands that Germans, from the Kaiser downwards, shall not be pronounced hypocrites, then so much the more emphatic must be the protest of all real Christians against their misrepresentation of Christianity. Space limits forbid here detailed illustrations, nor is it possible to say how far the Theological Professors and the Pastors

of Germany are responsible for the people's attitude. But every one knows the Kaiser's practice of pious speech-making on all occasions, and his ceaseless claiming 'Gott mit uns' — 'Our most powerful ally is God' — 'With God's gracious assistance' — 'By God's grace.' Such phrases flow forth continually, and there is little doubt that the bulk of his people are with him in these sentiments. But what do they amount to? His omission on almost all occasions of reference to Christ and the New Testament, cannot but be significant. It points, indeed, to the plain truth, which is supported now by all the lies and atrocities which have disgraced his government and himself, that the German religion of which he is the august mouthpiece is not Christianity at all, but an adapted and perverted Judaism. The Kaiser's God is but the tribal Deity of some earlier parts of the Old Testament. There are hosts of religious teachers in his realm who have not the least hesitation in affirming that, on a much larger and mightier scale, the German nation has taken the place of ancient Israel, and is therefore entirely warranted in treating other nations as the Hexateuch represents the Jews to have treated the tribes of Canaan. Unfortunately, there are very many in the Christian churches of this country and America whose attitude towards the Bible supports in great measure the German assumption. The War is vividly exhibiting its falsity and folly. The great lessons which Christendom has to learn hereupon, we shall go on to consider.

(34) War in general, and this War above all others, throws up into tragic prominence the latent evil in human nature. We shall not fail to acknowledge the nobler qualities which war evokes. But black is not obliterated by the proximity of white. There need be no appeal to exaggeration or sensationalism. It is enough to bear in mind what kind of fury is inevitably associated with every battle-field; or to realize by definite effort of thought what is actually represented by the daily reports of attack or defeat. Even if the outrageous barbarities which have covered the German hosts with shame were left out of account, there is wofully more than enough left to justify General Sherman's estimate that 'war is hell.' Apart from the awful suffering inflicted

with infernal deliberation by cruelly poisonous gases and the wholesale murder, for murder's sake, of innocent women on the sea, added to the fiendish atrocities in Belgium which are now proved up to the hilt by Lord Bryce's Report,¹ let us take just one quite ordinary statement as to what the fighting we daily read about actually connotes.

Dr. A. A. Martin, a Colonial surgeon with No. 15 Field Ambulance attached to the Fifth Division of the Expeditionary Force, was in the battles of the Marne and the Aisne, and he wrote a description of his experiences which was printed in the *Evening Standard*.

Dr. Martin, no novice in horrors, wrote :—

I was called at the double to attend some wounded in a narrow road under shell fire, two weeks ago. The scene defied description. I was absolutely silent with the ghastly horror of the scene. In the road lay mangled and bleeding men, mangled and bleeding horses, dead men lying in all sorts of convulsive attitudes, upturned wagons, smashed and splintered wood. Add to this the agonized groans of our wounded men, the screams of dying horses, and that impalpable, but nevertheless real, feeling of standing for a moment in the face of the Creator—and one can perhaps then feebly picture the scene of carnage, of the solemnity of death, and of the pitiless woe of the devastation.

Again :—

A cavalry ambulance accompanied by two officers came by. When the ambulance was abreast of the men the Germans landed a lyddite shell directly under the horses' feet. Eight men were killed outright on the road. One doctor was killed outright. The other doctor had his ankle and foot smashed. Ten men were badly wounded ; two died the same night. Eight horses

¹ This Report ought to be studied bravely, and truthfully estimated by every reader. The very fact that the *Cologne Gazette* and other German organs can only now shelter themselves by declaring that it is ' a collection of lies,' shows perhaps more than anything else to what depths of infamy human nature can descend, under the guidance of a bastard ' patriotism.'

were killed, and three horribly mangled. I happened to be the first doctor at hand, and dressed the wounded and had them conveyed to the shelter of a gravel-pit near by. They were all in very great pain, and all of them were given morphia hypodermically.

Lastly :—

As a surgeon, of course, what appeals to me is the state of our wounded and dying. The wounds caused by bursting shrapnel are most severe. The shrapnel rips, tears, lacerates, and penetrates the human tissues in a horrible manner, and our work consists in repairing and making good as best we can. Our best, alas, is too often of little avail in the face of the anatomical devastation produced. One man, for instance, had his lower jaw shattered to a pulp, and his tongue cloven in two. Another man had his skull smashed, and his brain welling over his face. Another is made completely blind. Another has the front of his abdomen ripped open, and his bowels protrude. Another has a knee joint blown open, a hand smashed, an ankle shattered, and so on and so on. One could multiply and enumerate without end. . . . But perhaps that is enough.

It is really impossible for non-combatants to realize what all this means. But with some effort we may get near enough to the hell involved to see how for the moment the human is left out of account and the beast, the savage, the brute, the devil, have all things their own way. When the ground has been strewn with mangled bodies of dead and dying, it is said to be a 'brilliant' victory. What it really exhibits is a ghastly revelation of all the most devilish traits of savagery, in those who were accounted civilized, educated, refined men.

(35) Our British Press has done wisely in supplying us continually with the estimates and aims of Germans in their own words. To prove them, in overwhelming measure, to be as false to fact as repulsive in their arrogance, and barbarous in their ideals, would be tragically easy. But

it would be equally useless. For the simple reason that they express what the German people—with few exceptions—actually believe and approve. Thus we have once more, only on an unprecedented scale, the old old lesson of the dangerous insufficiency of mere sincerity. If a comparatively few of Germany's intellectuals and war-lords are left out of thought, there is no room for doubt that the great bulk of the German nation sincerely believe what they have been taught, viz. that they are God's chosen people; that their 'kultur' and national ideals are superior to anything else on earth; that everything the State says or does is right, because the State does it; that they have had this War 'forced upon them' in sheer self-defence by other countries, especially England, out of pure spite and envy. Such a mania needs no comment beyond that already suggested. Misguided sincerity may lead to the most diabolical actions, and the sincere fanatic is far more dangerous than any wild beast. The frightful doings of the last eighteen months yield once more a dreadiul confirmation of Tennyson's

Hold thou the truth, define it well;
For fear divine philosophy
Should push beyond her mark, and be
Procuress to the lords of hell.

This assuredly is what Germany's philosophy has done, and is yet doing, before our eyes.

(36) It could not but happen that this War, with all its inevitable horrors, has given unlimited occasion to the enemies of Christianity to revile our faith, as intimated above. Superficial—if not dishonest—questions as to why Christianity did not prevent, and does not stop the War, are easily multiplied, and undoubtedly weigh more with the half-thinkers who everywhere abound, than any careful and truthful answers. In the great main issues of the struggle, however, there is some ground for thankfulness from the Christian standpoint, because two things stand out manifest beyond controversy. First, that the present European hell has come to pass, not through Christianity, but for the want of it. Secondly, that in a sense as real as indefinable, and

to an immeasurable extent, the present German onslaught is definitely and unmistakably anti-Christian. This is not in the least modified, let alone disproved, by the Kaiser's pious ejaculations, or the unblushing mendacities of some Theological Professors. It is small wonder that those who think anything good enough to be turned into a weapon against the Christian faith should seize such an opportunity to pour scorn upon it.

But the modern mind will no more be misled by such equivocations than America has been by the blandishments of Messrs. Bernstoff, Dernburg, and Münsterberg. There is no mistaking the issue at stake in the present titanic struggle. It is the world's choice between Nietzsche or Christ. The question of questions now tossing in this awful crucible is whether modern civilization shall evolve upwards in the direction of all that is connoted by the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, or whether 'the great blonde beast' that has been so plainly unmasked behind German militarism and 'kultur' shall become the type of animalism to which civilized humanity must revert. There has never been a greater crisis in the history of the world.

(37) That many and grave questions must arise for all whose Christianity is sincere, goes without saying. Some of these we will presently consider. Amongst all the things which our wisest teachers assure us must be changed by the tremendous upheaval now proceeding, it is certain that Christianity will not pass unaffected. Amidst the welter of woe which is blasting homes and ruining cities, as well as robbing the nations of the noblest of their sons, it cannot but be that problems without number will be raised which theology will find very difficult to answer. Bitter lamentations will flood hearts and homes alike, which neither sermons nor hymns will be able to assuage.

(38) Very much that has happened and is still proceeding during these dreadful weeks, tends to make it intensely and increasingly difficult to cultivate anything like a Christian spirit. Even apart from the dishonourable precipitation of the War by Germany, when we realize the infernal abominations which have marked their conduct since then,

it does indeed become almost impossible to contemplate this Maelström of iniquity with anything like Christian patience. From the avowedly non-Christian standpoint Mr. Blatchford says:—

I am writing as a man and as an Englishman. I am writing of a devilish War forced upon Europe for purposes of plunder and conquest, by a nation who envy and hate my country, and are straining every nerve and defying every humane scruple in the hope of outraging, insulting, and ravaging my country as they have already outraged and insulted and ravaged Belgium and part of France. It is the talk of chivalrous and generous treatment of our deadly and implacable enemies after the War, which I describe as pernicious nonsense.

There is so much sad and bitter truth in this indictment, that even from the Christian standpoint it is difficult to differ from the strong conclusion. Righteous indignation is indeed an inalienable part of the gospel of Christ; but where and how, under present conditions, His message of love and trust is to come in, will trouble the best Christian hearts to say.

(39) Nor will their difficulties be lessened by the due consideration of another fact, which can neither be concealed nor ignored, viz. that if response to the call of duty, self-sacrificing devotion to its demands, fearless facing of dangers on its behalf, dauntless heroism in meeting death for the sake of King and country, home and loved ones—if all these and kindred qualities of character count for anything morally and Christianly, then they have been and are yet daily exhibited by men who profess no religion, quite as unflinchingly as by those of avowed Christian faith. What are we to think honestly from the Christian standpoint of such a legion—for they are many? Does their behaviour mean that in the hour of trial there is no difference between faith and unfaith? If not, what does it mean?

(40) There can be little doubt that when the stress and strain are past, many potent influences will combine to put a heavy premium upon religious indifference. The man or

the nation who only calls upon God, or thinks of Jesus Christ, in the hour of bitter conflict when death or ruin threaten, is most likely to illustrate the old rough but forceful adage,

The devil was sick ; the devil a monk would be :
The devil grew well ; the devil a monk was he.

No man living can at present reckon up what will be the dreadful cost of this whole hellish business under which now we groan. But as we know well that there must come direful burdens to be borne in politics, economics, commerce, and social life, so is it certain that in religion the reaction from fearful strain in trenches, the results of an inevitably savage environment for weary months, the breaking down of old and hallowed associations, the snapping of tender and holy ties, the vast and complex difficulties of resuming normal life, will all tell unfavourably on organized Christianity. So much so that unless a new heart and an enlarged mind in all the churches, join with unprecedented devotion on the part of all their members and adherents, Christianity in the coming days is much more likely to dwindle into an esoteric society than to bring the world into its fold.

This being the case, it is only right and necessary that we should look carefully for any elements of good which may be discovered in the wake of Europe's calamity. Twenty of these at least might be profitably dwelt upon at length, but it shall suffice here to do little more than specify them.

(41) To an extent that no man can measure, the dead weight of inertia which gathers round time-honoured conventions, like barnacles on the hull of a long-voyaged steamer, will be gone when peace is signed. How much labour of reconstruction this will mean for politicians, statesmen, diplomatists, social reformers, must not concern us here. Christianity, as expounded in the churches, has become very largely a collection of conventions—especially as embodied in an Established Church—which have been practically irresistible. How far these have barred the path of progress is witnessed in the fact that, in spite of all efforts, three-fourths at least of the people in these realms are dissociated from

the churches, and devoid of any distinct Christian convictions. There is reason to hope that the new start which will shortly be forced upon Christendom will bring with it such increased reality in every department as will succeed where deep-grooved conventions have failed.

(42) It is something to have demonstrated the failure of sham and superficiality. Merely nominal, external, professional, conventional religion, is a sham; and we are all witnesses how horribly it has failed, not only in Germany, but throughout Europe. It may well be often repeated, for it is ever true, that if Europe had been Christian, this War would never have broken out. The present horror is the offspring of religious unreality.

(43) It is good sometimes to be put upon one's mettle. It is well said that no one knows what he can do until he is compelled to do it. The coming situation is so charged with iconoclastic potencies that there is no risk at all in the saying that Christianity—in its human apprehension and representation—will have to be either mended or ended. If that does not put the churches upon their mettle as they have never been before, they will deserve to perish.

(44) One great lesson which it may be hoped will contribute to the mending rather than the ending of Christianity, is the vivid demonstration which this War has brought about of the insignificance of ecclesiastical divisions. Kikuyu was small enough before the War—even as Zanzibar itself stands for a political blunder—but now it has become too microscopic for ordinary mental vision to recognize. The impertinence of a younger ecclesiastic excommunicating a venerable senior on the episcopal bench is forgiven by forgetting. In hospitals, scarcely less than in trenches, ecclesiastical formulae go by the board. What we need and must have, in face of cruel suffering and death, is not rubric but reality. The truth of the pitiful, forgiving, saving love of God in Jesus Christ comprises all the Gospel men crave.

(45) If a clinging to episcopal ritual and sacerdotal form be laid to the charge of one section of the Christian Church, the so-called 'Free Churches' are by no means free from reproach of another kind. Doctrinal orthodoxy has been with them, only too often, quite as real a swaddling-band as

Anglican or Roman sacerdotalism. But the stern realities of war set both these aside as quite secondary. Not what a man believes, but how he believes, becomes the crucial query. On the battle-field, as in the hospital, the points of difference between theories of inspiration and of atonement are never discussed. Nor would a Methodist chaplain take in hand to argue a Unitarian into his own theology. Both would join to say, with the Romanist who wrote it, that—

The love of God is broader
Than the measures of man's mind ;
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind.

(46) If there be one thing more than another which the pitiless stress of war has demonstrated, it is how the same redeeming qualities of human nature which to some real extent mitigate its horrors with gleams of nobility, may and do arise in many ways, and spring from very different sources. In the terrible strains of war the characteristics most needed amongst soldiers are faithfulness to duty, obedience to orders, calm courage under attack, bravery even unto death in critical moments, chivalrous treatment of enemies, and the like. But all these are found amongst the contending forces irrespective of creed or nationality. The Romanist from France or Belgium, the Russian eikon-worshipper, the Mussulman from India, the German Lutheran, no less than the Anglican or Methodist or Baptist from this country or our colonies, each and all are daily displaying these very same qualities. It is a lesson which the religion of the future must not fail to appreciate.

(47) Undoubtedly this War, for all its devilry on the German side, and its cost in suffering and death on that of the Allies, has brought into existence, as well as into prominence, some of the noblest traits of character possible to human beings. In one city it was stated recently that ' the scum of the town ' had been converted into a noble band of brave young men, by the discipline of training, and it may be taken as both true and typical. Myriads of men who had been idle wasters

of time and strength, if not also of money and talents, are now living units of force on behalf of honour, and truth, and justice, and liberty, and chivalry. Thousands of women who were before the War little more than butterflies of fashion, or selfish incarnations of frivolity, to say nothing worse, are now showing what angel possibilities lie latent in womanhood. They are proving the dignity of their sex, together with the rightfulness of their claims to more real recognition of oneness with men, by their tender and skilled and practical sympathy, far more than by any wild antics of suffragettes or hysteric demands for 'women's rights.'

After all, let Nietzsche rave as he may, and German brutality ravage as it will, humanity has now evolved far enough above the beast to know that not in emulating the bloody jaws of the tiger, or the poison fangs of serpents, or the ruthless devastation of the tornado, does human nobility consist, but ever more and more in the cultivation of those gentler but more just, tenderer but diviner, traits of character for which Jesus Christ ever stands. It is enheartening part of the present struggle between the mysteries of good and evil, and inspiring pledge of the final triumph of good, that these truly higher and nobler qualities are so distinctively emerging from the black night of horror which now envelops Europe. It is not enough to say that a new civilization must come after the storm is past. It will be a better civilization. Not only will the dragon curse of militarism, we may hope, be slain for evermore, but Mr. Benjamin Kidd's vision of the new Democracy will be brought nearer to realization than unbroken peace, surfeited with ease and comfort, with luxury and selfishness, could ever have accomplished.

Those who think that the new Democracy is about to bring chaos instead of order, do not rightly apprehend the nature of his strength. They do not perceive that his arrival is the crowning result of an ethical movement in which qualities and attributes which we have all been taught to regard as the very highest of which human nature is capable, find the completest expression they have ever reached in the history of the race.¹

¹ *Social Evolution*, p. 329.

(48) When all the facts are really taken into account, it is no small asset on the side of good, from the Christian standpoint, that, in this country at all events, there has been and even yet is no such development of venomous hate as possesses only too plainly the nation which we have to oppose. We have abundant proofs of the imperfections of our own daily press, but we have nothing which for bitterness, conceit, and falsity, can compare with the *Cologne Gazette*, or the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, or the *Berliner Tageblatt* and *Morgenpost*, or the *Neue Freie Presse*, and the rest. The reckless lying and abusive bombast of these journals excite, indeed, our indignation; but we have no Lissauer's Song of Hate; we have no novelists preaching hatred—'creative hatred, buoyant hatred, which is at once a weapon and an inspiration—the gigantic, everlasting, inextinguishable hatred of Germans for England.'

We have, mercifully, no Lieut.-Colonel Kaden declaring as in the *Lille War Gazette* :—

We have but one war-cry—'God punish England.' Hiss this to one another in the trenches, in the charge, hiss it as it were the sound of licking flame. Behold in every dead comrade a sacrifice forced from you by this accursed people. You German people at home, feed this fire of hate. You mothers, engrave this in the heart of the babe at your breast. You thousands of teachers to whom millions of German children look up with eyes and hearts, teach hate, unquenchable hate. You homes of German learning, pile up the fuel on this fire. You masters, carry the flame to your workshops; axe and hammer will fall the heavier when arms are nerved by this hate. Listen to the ceaseless song of the German forest, then will your love for this wondrous land find the right words. Hate, unquenchable hate—Germany, Germany above all.

Nor have we any teachers of religion in this country, whatever our religious failures, like unto Pastor Bernhard Lösche, of Leipzig, whose pamphlet entitled *Thou Proud England, Be Ashamed*, has had enormous circulation in neutral countries

as well as in his own. The whole world, according to him, is infected with British poison :—

Death and destruction to the poison-mixers in the land of the Thames! Cain, Ahab, Judas, and Ephialtes were heroes compared with these rascals. The Britons have struck God a blow in the face. May God destroy all Germans with plague and pestilence, rather than that we should fall into the hands of the Britons!¹

This Pastor has the effrontery to declare that nothing can save the world but 'Christian German sentiment.' We may well hope for something more Christian and less German. But it shows what we have to face when the War is over.

(49) It is, however, the spirit of Germany's mentors as well as of her warriors. Its incarnation in the words and deeds of this demented nation has at least done this good service. It has shown what the mind that reviles Christ and curses Christianity—as Nietzsche did—comes to, when embodied in a nation, and exhibited in war conducted on its principles. Object-lessons are after all not seldom the most effective. The Spartans made their helots drunk, in order to teach their children the curse of drunkenness. The curse of brutal militarism, as embodied in the Prussian Junker carrying out the precepts of Nietzsche and the diabolic craft of Bernhardt, is now plainly exhibited to modern humanity. Those who, whilst retaining their humanness, have hitherto thought little or nothing of Christ, may well be expected to turn to Him in revulsion from the horrors which those who have turned from Him have brought to pass. If the devilish happenings of this War, sanctioned, nay, commanded, by the Kaiser and his war-crew, are illustrations of German Christianity, a world that did not know better would undoubtedly vomit such religion out of its mouth, as loathsome cant. But for all who do know better, who know that it is no more Christian than was the religion of the Indian Thugs, the lesson of

¹ The reviewer of this precious production, himself long resident in Berlin, says—'There are passages in this pamphlet so foul that I dare not write them. I know no English newspaper that would publish them.'

revulsion from Nietzsche to Christ becomes immeasurably more effective than all the sermons of Christendom.

(50) There is no need to dwell upon the incalculable amount of sympathy, alike tender and practical, which has been evoked by this War. It may be said, with no fear of exaggeration, that never before in the world's history has Good Samaritanism been practised on such a scale. That there is and yet will be tragic need for more, may be sadly confessed. But enough is already working to give the lie direct to Nietzsche, and promise something for coming generations infinitely nobler than the 'great blonde beast' who represents his 'superman.' That nobler something is real Christianity.

(51) In the same direction, moreover, tends the unmeasured amount of actual human brotherhood which has been developed on the side of the Allies, by the co-operation and comradeship which war duties and dangers and sufferings make inevitable. French and English, Belgian and Russian soldiers have been compelled to fraternize. It is open, of course, to the political cynic to say that it is only a brotherhood of convenience, which a future war may turn to hate. But there are good reasons for hoping that such pessimism will not be fulfilled, and that the nations will be permanently drawn nearer to each other. As for the soldiers themselves, happily in all the Allied Forces there is nothing approaching to the Prussian idea of military 'discipline,' which puts a coarse dividing line of cruel tyranny between officers and men. Our brave fellows are not hounded into a firing line by armed brutes behind them, but led into action by officers who, in the enormous majority of cases, are comrades and brothers no less for being, in noblest sense, gentlemen. Officers they are who would give themselves for those in their charge, and for whom, in turn, their men would risk their lives.

Some exceptions to such camaraderie there may be, but they are comparatively few, and the above ideal is not fancy but fact. In the actual ranks there grows of necessity an even closer brotherhood. Men who have to stand side by side in all conditions of stress and strain, facing the possibility of death at any moment, cannot be other than brotherly. Nor is such comradeship dissolved when the conflict is over. Throughout the whole nation, moreover, it may be said with

truth that there is a drawing together of all ranks and classes such as no times of peace and prosperity bring to pass. It is hard to define, but it means more than is usually included under the term 'patriotism.' It is rather the realization of a humanism which only waits for the touch of a higher hand to turn it into real Christian brotherhood. That is one of the greatest hopes of the future.

(52) Another great lesson which these days of anxiety and anguish are forcing upon us, as our times of comfortable peace have largely failed to do, is the need for a Christian faith which shall be truly all-pervading and all-controlling. The explanation of the comparative failure of Christianity which has permitted evil so to accumulate as to make possible this fearful European conflagration, is not merely the lack, as is sometimes said, of personal devotion on the part of believers. Nor is it the growing absence of modern men and women from church services. Besides these, and even more than these, it is the narrowness of the ideal which has passed for 'salvation,' and the well-meant but mistaken restrictions of genuine piety to 'things spiritual and eternal.'¹ A real and deep line has been drawn, alike by individuals and churches, between religious and secular affairs, and the

¹ Fifty years ago Sir J. Seeley, in his deservedly famous *Ecce Homo*, wrote thus concerning ordinary evangelical religion :—'The objection which practical men take is a very important one, as the criticisms of such men always are, being founded commonly upon large observation and not perverted by theory. They say that the love of Christ in practice does not produce the nobleness and largeness of character which has been represented as its proper and natural result; that instead of inspiring those who feel it with reverence and hope for their kind, it makes them exceedingly narrow in their sympathies, disposed to deny and explain away even the most manifest virtues displayed by men, and to despair of the future destiny of that great majority of their fellow creatures; that instead of binding them to their kind, it divides them from it by a gulf which they themselves proclaim to be impassable and eternal, and unites them only in a gloomy conspiracy of misanthropy with each other; that it is indeed a law-making power, but that the laws it makes are little-minded and vexatious prohibitions of things innocent, demoralizing restraints upon the freedom of joy and the healthy instincts of nature; that it favours hypocrisy, moroseness, and sometimes lunacy; that the only vice it has power to check is thoughtlessness, and its only beneficial effect is that of forcing into activity, though not always into healthy activity, the faculty of serious reflection.

'This may be a just picture of a large class of religious men, but it is impossible in the nature of things that such effects should be produced by a pure, personal devotion to Christ.' (Cheap Edition, p. 58.)

preacher has been forbidden, in the name of conventional 'spirituality,' to deal in the pulpit with the very matters, political, economic, commercial, social, which most intimately concern the daily life of men and women, as well as regulate the relationship of nations. So comes it to pass that the artisan classes have avowed that they feel no interest in what the churches represent, whilst what they do most desire to consider is never named.

If, furthermore, it be accounted a gain that men of science have largely ceased to attack Christianity, through recognizing that it deals with a higher realm than the physical, it is a corresponding loss that statesmen and politicians have practically ignored Christian faith, as having nothing to do with the world they represent. The War has shown with fearful emphasis what comes when the secular is divorced from the truly spiritual. The coming of Democracy, with its insistence upon a better, fairer, social order—whether it takes the form of Socialism or any other economic theory—at least means that if Christianity is to maintain its position, let alone 'save the world,' it will have to be broader in its outlook and enter more fully into all human interests. The apostolic ideal, we know, was 'Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God'—'In the name of the Lord Jesus.' If that ideal had been universally followed, there would have been no more possibility of war than need for social reform.

(53) The terrible tragedy of this War has been intimately associated with religion, not only in Germany, but in all the countries of the Allies. There are abounding reasons for repudiating the blasphemous conceits with which the Kaiser claims that God—the Christian God—is on the side of his country's dishonour in commencing this War, and of his hordes in their ensuing infernal atrocities. But that is far from being all that demands consideration. German theology has long been nondescript. The extent to which German Theologians, as well as Pastors, are under the thumb of the State, is happily without parallel in this country. But in non-political directions the scientific thoroughness of their critical investigations has had such free scope, that no one can say in that country what Christianity really stands for.

It is manifest to all except avowed Unitarians, that neither Harnack's *Essence of Christianity* nor, still less, Eucken's *Can We Still Be Christians?* have given the modern world a valid or final statement of what true Christianity involves. If we are to judge from the impassioned deliverances of almost all German preachers at the present time, the prevalent conception in that land concerning the Christian religion is that of a Machiavellian Judaism. Even if the critical vagaries of the school of Kalthoff and Drews—which deny that Jesus ever lived—be dismissed as summarily as they deserve, it is woefully plain that the Christian theology of the future will not have to be 'made in Germany.' When one thinks of what has been said and done in Christ's name by the Lutheran German national church, it ceases to be a wonder that so vast a proportion of the nation are wholly unchristian, if not violently anti-Christian. No doubt there are some noble mystics who still say with Jacob Behmen, three centuries ago :—

A true Christian, who is born anew of the spirit of Christ, is in the simplicity of Christ, and hath no strife or contention with any man about religion.

But this attitude of mind will neither mould the nation, nor teach the modern world what to believe and practise under the Christian name. This War has undoubtedly cast the Christian faith into a crucible, in some respects more fierce and trying than the early persecutions. If the German nation is ever to be undeceived, and redeemed from the false ideals to which it has been urged during the last half-century, there will have to be a new and better conception of religion. But religion after all depends upon theology. A new theology, which shall be at once Christian and true, is the greatest need of the hour, not only for Germany, but for modern Europe. As regards our own land, an eminent scholar has said recently, with unmeasured truth, that—

The question of belief is becoming a much more serious question for the Free Churches than the question of their public work or social sympathies. For these concern

their relations to the public, while their faith concerns their existence.¹

That this applies quite as much to the Anglican as to the Free Churches, needs no demonstration. When the War is over, the differences of conviction which are hushed on the battle-field, and in hospital, will reassert themselves, and High Church, Low Church, Broad Church, Free Church, will have more than ever to justify their beliefs and appeals before the coming democracy.

(54) Whether it be called 'New Theology' or 'Modernism,' or any other name, it is certain that there will have to be a new statement of Christian foundations and doctrines, if the people of this country, and of the new Europe, are to be so Christianized as to make a recurrence of the present Armageddon impossible, and the nobler life for all the nations possible. The writer above quoted has added most truly that—

It cannot be too clearly understood that no amount of well-doing, and no amount of zeal, and no amount of ethereal mysticism will save the situation which is being forced upon us. If men do not know what to believe, they will soon not know what to do. Only two courses are possible—either to stand on every statement of an infallible book, or to treat extreme rationalism with a higher reasonableness, meet the critics on their own ground, accept results tested by their own methods in sounder hands, watch the mere philologist, edit the report brought by the Uhlans of research, distrust all criticism inspired by a negative dogma rather than by historic science, and proceed amidst all in the experienced liberty with which Christ crucified has set our conscience free to be sure and bold in Him.²

(55) It is quite inevitable that the frightful slaughter of thousands of our youngest and in many respects best men

¹ Dr. Forsyth, in *Inspiration and Authority of Holy Scripture*, by Dr. M. Gibson, p. xvii.

² Dr. Forsyth, as above, p. xii.

should put unmeasured emphasis upon the great question of the hereafter. We speak with reverent admiration of the way in which our soldiers face death. It is a marvellous and awe-inspiring tribute to the intrinsic greatness of human nature, which finds no analogy in the merely animal world. There are very few who are content to avow no distinction between the dying soldier and the dying horse. What becomes of our dead heroes—husbands, fathers, brothers, sons, lovers, friends? Can we be content to say that for them now as for ourselves soon, death ends all, and nothing but hopeless oblivion remains? The human answer, with unspeakable emphasis, is, 'No; we cannot.' It is not ours here to discuss the whole subject of human immortality; but it is part of the purpose of these pages to point out how, through the fearful world-tragedy which is now in process, the vast possibilities of the hereafter are being driven home to the hearts of millions of our fellows, and to affirm that the materialism which declares that mind and brain are one, so that the death of the body involves the end of the self which inhabited it, is disproved by fact and discredited by modern science. Also that the animalism which is content to eat and drink and fight and work, without a thought of those who are gone, or a care that they themselves soon are going hence, is utterly unworthy of human nature. Whatever be the difficulties of the mysteries of a post-mortem future, the hope for it is the hall-mark of humanity.

My own dim life shall teach me this,
That life shall live for evermore.
Else earth is darkness at the core,
And dust and ashes all that is.

The whole modern case, from the standpoint of science, is well summed up by Sir Oliver Lodge, as a competent witness:—

Those who think that reality is limited to its terrestrial manifestation doubtless have a philosophy of their own, to which they are entitled and to which at any rate they are welcome; but if they set up to teach others that monism signifies a limitation of mind to the potentialities of matter as at present known; if they teach a

pantheism which identifies God with nature in this narrow sense ; if they hold that mind and what they call matter are so intimately connected that no transcendence is possible ; that without the cerebral hemispheres, consciousness and intelligence and emotion and love and all the higher attributes towards which humanity is slowly advancing, would cease to be ; that the term soul signifies a sum of plasma movements in the ganglion cells ; and that the term God is limited to the operation of a known evolutionary process, and can be represented as ' the infinite sum of all natural forces, the sum of all atomic forces and all ether vibrations,' to quote Professor Haeckel ; then such philosophers must be content with an audience of uneducated persons.¹

(56) But the more a real belief in human immortality is brought home to us by the awful holocaust of this War, and commended to us by most recent science, as well as confirmed by facts which emerge from many years' honest investigation by competent witnesses, the stronger becomes the demand for a revision of Christian eschatology. No attempt can here be made to decide between conflicting theories. But mind and heart combine under the enormous pressure of the frightful hurricane of death which this War has brought, to insist upon three things. There will have to be a more thoughtful effort made, on the lines of science no less than Scripture, to formulate a belief in the hereafter worthy of all that is best in humanity. There will have to be a cessation of the sweeping judgements and repulsive threatenings which have formed too large a part of popular theology. There must and will come to pass a reverent agnosticism which is more and more content to leave moral judgements of the after-death realm to Him who alone is able truly to appraise human character ; as also to waive all attempts to express in detail, realities of another stage of being for which this life can provide neither language nor conception.

(57) Another Christian result of the fearful conflict now raging, which has been partly anticipated, but calls for more definite statement, is the demonstration of the absolute

¹ *Life and Matter* (Cheap Edition), p. 57.

necessity of a better understanding of the Bible. In briefest statement, the wofully false conceptions of destiny and of duty which have permeated the whole German nation during the last fifty years, along with the repulsive misrepresentations of the Christian God which have nauseated the modern world, have both sprung from the misuse of the Bible by the Kaiser and his underlings. This misuse is directly traceable to a false theory of inspiration concerning its contents. Such a doctrine of inspiration, whether it be called 'verbal,' or 'plenary,' or 'dynamic,' or 'effectual,' ignores the history and structure of the Bible, and claims for the whole of it the same value and authority. Thus it identifies Christianity with Judaism, and seeks to bind upon the Christian conscience the ideals and commands of the Old Testament. It will, therefore, have to be definitely and universally set aside.

Every one knows that during the last half-century great changes have come over Christian thought in this respect. But the old and mischievous fallacies hereupon die very hard, especially as they are still tenaciously held by not a few to whom the people look for guidance. In some cases, indeed, it seems to pass for superior Christian devotion to emphasize the older views and denounce as traitors all who depart from them. So comes to pass what Mr. Bernard Snell has, alas, only too truthfully asserted :—

The Bible needs neither our apology nor our eulogy ; it needs only to be understood. And it is not understood. Despite the publication of excellent expositions of the conclusions of competent scholars, despite the fact that in the centres of sound learning these conclusions form the basis of instruction, the ignorance of the Christian public is almost undisturbed, and the majority of professional teachers of the Bible speak as if nothing had happened to interfere with the traditional assumption that all Scriptures are equally inspired, authoritative, and infallible.¹

Our daily press would smile with pity, if not contempt, at the suggestion that a better understanding of the Bible

¹ *The Value of the Old Testament*, p. 11.

would have prevented the curse that now rests upon Europe. But it is far from a foolish utterance. Given only the space, it could be convincingly demonstrated. Hence it is not enough to point triumphantly, as the Bible Society does, to the number of copies of Scripture portions which are now circulated in some five hundred languages. In that fact, taken alone, there is no guarantee that Europe or the world will not again be plunged into such a hell as the present. It is Philip's question to the Eunuch which has to be answered, if the nations are to be saved from further mad folly under the aegis of German piety. It is the better understanding of the Bible which is needed, if the world is to be spared the spectacle of a monarch calling upon God whom Jesus Christ reveals, as the approver of lies and treachery, and the helper of such savage abominations and infernal atrocities as have righteously evoked the execration of the whole modern world.

(58) Who, speaking from the Christian standpoint, can deny that when the tumult of blood is over, and the nations can draw breath to consider their position, that which will be most of all needed to save Christianity from the failures of the past, and open the way to something more like the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth, will be, throughout all the churches, truer doctrine and better practice? That is, of course, soon said. It may easily pass for a vapid platitude. But only when it is regarded as, say, a penny ordinarily is—a trifle to be spent without thought. Our scientists, however, insist that if we could only tap the energy latent in that coin, it would suffice to take a goods train round the world. So would truer doctrine—which means not merely a revised theology, but more effective teaching of it—go far towards regenerating humanity.

Certainly Christianity has not failed for want of preaching. It is the preaching that has failed for want of teaching. 'Sermons' by the myriad have been delivered, only too many of which have contained no more real teaching—such teaching as the age both needs and wants—than a ton of pitchblende does of radium. That there are notable exceptions, only makes the rule more vivid. It is the case now, but will be even more so presently, that in

every nation, certainly not least in our own, the people are hungry for truth. But they will not accept tradition instead. They can neither be hoodwinked nor put back intellectually to the nineteenth century, let alone the eighteenth.

The resistless spread of modern knowledge, together with the ruthless fight of modern life, drive them to ask for truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The appeal comes almost equally from three directions, from believers, from unbelievers, from the undecided. Believers need guidance from their professional teachers more than ever, by reason of the application of modern knowledge, historical, critical, and scientific, to the foundations and doctrines of Christianity. A new theology is inevitable. The only question is wherein shall it differ from the old. That inquiry becomes year by year more insistent. It is worse than useless to ignore it, and recommend comforting spiritual expository preaching as the never-failing Christian ideal. Myriads are as bravely and pathetically clinging to their faith in spite of the modern corrosive non-religious atmosphere, as our soldiers cling to trenches swept by the Germans' deadly gas. They need relief by wise guidance; and for want of it they are drifting away into hopeless confusion. Unbelief is, as a rule, treated by the churches with contempt. The old falsity that doubt must mean moral depravity is indeed exploded. But anything like a fair, intelligent, steady effort to meet modern opposition to Christian beliefs, is generally discouraged in the churches.

The reiterated fallacy that the only effect of wise dealing in public with the manifest objections to Christian belief is to trouble the minds of hearers, still remains, as if the whole modern atmosphere was absolutely inoperative. So it comes to pass that the potent and ever-growing influences of the press—in books, say, like those of Professor Ellis McTaggart, or Sir F. Younghusband, or the R.P.A. productions—make their mark on thoughtful men, whilst popular journalism stirs up definite, if not virulent, anti-Christian feeling amongst the people. And the churches make no sign. The notion is quite a favourite one just now, that when the War is over, the nation will wholly respond to Christian appeals, and

unbelief will cease to be. It is a fool's Paradise, in which only the wilfully blind will live at peace. The fact that more than three-fourths of the population of this country—to say nothing of the Continent—are outside the churches altogether, is not only and wholly due to indifference. The spiritual inertia is quite as much mental as moral. It is true that the 'common people' have not recoiled from the gospel of Jesus Christ; they have not even neglected the real Gospel. What they have done is to turn a deaf ear to presentations of the Gospel which have so often ignored their most real virtues, their fairest rights, their unjust sufferings, their most pressing needs. Men of all classes whom the age has compelled to think, have recoiled from representations of Christian doctrine which have shocked their moral sense, or have offered them traditional authority in the place of rational grounds upon which to develop a valid faith. The close of the War will undoubtedly give to all the churches a new and unmeasured opportunity for wisely teaching Christian truth. Whether they will embrace it, remains to be seen.

(59) The call for more consistent living, as the natural and necessary accompaniment to truer teaching, is too plain and emphatic to need elaboration. Perhaps it will come as much more effectively as succinctly from the lips of a conservative Anglican clergyman:—

It is a hard saying but a wholesome one, that the great majority of Christians have for centuries done everything with the moral rule of the gospel except obey it. They have read it aloud in their churches and homes, they enshrined it in a magnificent system of worship, they have glossed and commented it till it bears a suspicious resemblance to the code which they find most profitable and convenient, they have shaped and trimmed it to fit into a corner of an otherwise pagan existence.¹

¹ *Bampton Lectures for 1907*, by J. H. F. Peile, p. 21. The full title of these lectures is 'The Reproach of the Gospel, an Inquiry into the Apparent Failure of Christianity as a General Rule of Life and Conduct, with Special Reference to the Present Time.' When these were written it was a time of peace, but it would be difficult indeed to find a better statement of what truly Christian principles involve in war, or what they should bring to pass when the War is over. Hence repeated reference in these pages.

Whether this estimate be 'hard' or not, it is true. And it brings us face to face with the main issue. It cannot be gainsaid that true teaching—in the best sense, 'up to date'—is more than ever necessary, if modern populations are to apprehend a theology which deserves to be called Christian. The best theology is after all but the handmaid of religion. It is the religion of a nation which counts, on the world scale, and in international relationships. Religion is said to be an affair of the heart, as theology is of the mind. But real religion is certainly not a mere tide of emotion. As such, it may work ill no less than good—few things are so destructive as a tidal wave. It is rather a river that flows between strong banks, spreading fertility and bearing burdens for human benefit. True religion is the practical adaptation of true theology, by sincere believers, to their own characters and the conditions of human life around them. That is the hope of the future, when the curse of this War is lifted.

(60) There remains but one question to ask. Is it either probable or possible that when the new European peace adjustments have been made between the nations, a real and worthy 'religious revival' will take place, such as will not only prevent the recurrence of the present bloody struggle, but pave the way for that Kingdom of God of which the apostle spoke?

For the kingdom of God does not consist of eating and drinking, but of right conduct, peace, and joy, through the Holy Spirit; and whoever in this way devotedly serves Christ, God takes pleasure in him, and men highly commend him.¹

'*Devotedly serves Christ,*' as a rendering of Paul's words, is no less truthful than emphatic. More accurate still it would be to say 'enslaves himself' to Christ. This is what the apostle ever delighted to write of himself and Timothy in his letters—'bondservants of Jesus Christ.' It is significant to find a 'Regius Professor of Modern History' at Cambridge saying the same thing. The last words of Professor Seeley

¹ Rom. xiv. 17, 18 (Weymouth).

above quoted were 'a pure personal devotion to Christ.' It will be well to note what he said further :—

We are to remember that nothing has been subjected to such multiform and grotesque perversion as Christianity. Certainly the direct love of Christ, as it was felt by His first followers, is a rare thing amongst modern Christians. That is wanting for the most part which Christ held to be all in all, spontaneous warmth, free and generous devotion. That the fruits of a Christianity so hollow should be poor and sickly, is not surprising.

But that Christ's method when rightly applied is really of mighty force may be shown by an argument which the severest censor of Christians will hardly refuse to admit. . . . Perhaps the truth is that there has scarcely been a Christian country since the time of Christ, where a century has passed without exhibiting a character of such elevation that his mere presence has shamed the bad, and made the good better, and has been felt at times like the presence of God Himself. And if this be so, has Christ failed or can Christianity die ?¹

Two things are really here affirmed, viz. that what is wanting, for Europe as much as for each human soul, is 'that higher-toned goodness which we call holiness.' And the only way to its being brought about, is 'pure personal devotion to Christ.' Mockers may have their sneer, sceptics may dubiously shake their heads, and agnostics pronounce it only a pious phantasy, but it remains none the less sure that 'this witness is true,' on both negative and positive grounds.

For want of all that 'this higher-toned goodness which we call holiness' connotes, this cursed War has been flung upon the nations of Europe. They did not want it. That is truth which no floods of lies can shake.² Germany did want it. That is proved to the hilt. Seven years ago, in the secret Potsdam War Council, the Kaiser—belauded by

¹ *Ecce Homo* (Everyman Edition), p. 137.

² For proof of such assertion see the author's *Britain Justified and Plain Truths versus German Lies*, with other reliable official summaries.

Theological Professors and Pastors as the 'Peace-maker of Europe'—said to his assembled lords (June 1908):—

Yes, gentlemen, Germany over everything in the world, the first power on earth both in peace and war, that is the place which I have been ordered of God to conquer for her, and which I will conquer for her with the help of the Almighty. . . . You will desire to know how the outbreak of hostilities will be brought about. I can assure you on this point. Certainly we shall not have to go far to find a just cause for war. My army of spies scattered all over Great Britain and France, as it is over North and South America, as well as all the other parts of the world where German interests may come to a clash with a foreign power, will take good care of that. I have issued already, some time since, secret orders that will at the proper moment accomplish what we desire. If God will help us, as I am convinced He will, I trust that at the end of the coming year (1909) the Imperial treasury will be filled to overflowing with the gold of the British and French war indemnities. Then, but not before, the moment will have come to talk of disarmament and arbitration.¹

This is the man of peace, and this the country which now, in its mendacious press and wherever it can get a hearing, is bleating out its innocence and rolling pious eyes to heaven to save it from the malignant 'attack' of envious nations upon its modest and peaceful Fatherland! Whence, we are driven to ask, comes this blasphemy, with its atrocious consequences? What is its *fons et origo*? There need be no hesitation for the answer. It comes from the exact opposite of what Professor Seeley outlined. The enormous and thorough preparation for war which made Germany alone ready for it at the outset must, all the world knows, have been a matter of years, not days. And indeed the years go back to the time before Bernhardi, and before Treitschke; before the ex-English Chamberlain's book corrupted the people's mind; before Nietzsche was heard of. The Franco-Prussian War,

¹ See *German Spies in England*, by William Le Queux, pp. 27-33.

which set working the poison of conceit and greed throughout a new Empire, was the work of Prussia; just as the most devilish deeds of the present War are Prussian. How, then, comes it that Prussia has thus been the incarnation of evil for more than a century in the heart of Europe? The history cannot be even summarized here,¹ but the explanation may. It is found in the selfish, ruthless godlessness which made itself most conspicuous in the Prussian king whom Carlyle extolled, and who has been known to after generations as 'the Great.' Not because of what he did for his own subjects, but as Mr. Fletcher has said:—

Rather it was the fact that having shamelessly set himself to grab the property of his weaker neighbours, he knew how to defend his thefts by feats of arms which astonished his own generation, and remain memorable even to our own.

That is to say, as an avowed atheist and utter scoffer at the Christian faith, for him 'Macht geht vor Recht'—'Might makes right'—was the principle which he exemplified. By brute force he so glorified it, that it became the heritage of his nation, and has borne infernal fruit ever since. It found a thorough exponent in the middle of the nineteenth century, when Bismarck boldly avowed that Prussia's way had to be made 'Durch Blut und Eisen.' How the blood and iron policy has worked since then, every one knows. Rather more than a century after Frederick 'the Great' had shamelessly stolen Silesia from Austria, nearly a century after his criminal suggestion of the first partition of Poland, Bismarckian Prussia anticipated Bernhardi and Bethmann-Hollweg, in the downright robbery of Schleswig-Holstein from Denmark. Two years later, 1866, Austria was beaten down by the Prussian needle guns. Then, after an interval of only four years, came the French *débâcle* known as the Franco-Prussian War. This really meant the swift, resistless crushing of an unprepared nation by the vast and perfect military machine

¹ But it may be found succinctly put in the excellent little booklet of Mr. C. R. L. Fletcher, in the 'Oxford Pamphlet' Series—*The Germans, Their Empire, How They Have Made It*. A fuller account is well given by Mr. G. H. Perris in his *Germany and the German Emperor* (Melrose).

which incarnated the ideal of the great Frederick. It is all a shameful, miserable story. It is quite irrelevant to reiterate that other nations than Prussia have been faulty. The great plain fact which looms out too large to be questioned, is that this whole welter of sin and shame, of sorrow and suffering, could never have happened, any more than Germany's precipitation of this War, if the 'higher-toned goodness' at which Frederick sneered had been revered and practised. That is sufficient negative testimony to Christianity whilst the world lasts.

What else would come with that 'goodness,' if received and obeyed, beyond all that other religions can promise, may be left to other occasions for demonstration. The final positive principle here to be learned from the dire European tragedy which has stained this century with blood for evermore, is that which modern science, philosophy, literature, and journalism, least acknowledge, or most deeply doubt, but which the modern Professor of History so deliberately affirmed. 'Holiness'—taken as the all-embracing epitome of the highest Christian character—is the only hope of the better day when it shall be impossible for any man or any nation again to let loose the hell-dogs of war. And the only way to that holiness is—even as our impartial witness testifies—through 'pure personal devotion to Christ.' Alas, that is not only the way, but the stumbling-block. Cynical criticism avows that it cannot follow a man who never lived. Gathering clouds in theology obscure all that makes Him a Saviour to be loved, and leaves only a human memory to be perpetuated. Civilized animalism sets Him aside with a—'We will not have this man to reign over us.' Professing Christians too often—a devoted minority does not mitigate the reality of a vast majority—for all their services and ceremonies, do but confirm the unprejudiced estimate—'That is wanting for the most part which Christ held to be all in all, spontaneous warmth, free and generous devotion.' The greatest of the Apostles wrote, 'Wherefore we make it our very soul of love and honour, whether we live or die, to please Him.' Modern Christendom occasionally goes to church. The War has written large, in letters of blood, that these two are not the same.

III

THE REAL CHRISTIAN PROBLEM

It is beyond contradiction that Christianity is incarnate in churches, however various these may be. In some respects it is matter for regret that there should yet be such great cleavages in Christendom as are represented by the names Roman, Greek, Anglican, and Free Churches. But they stand for differences of conviction as deep as sincere, and there is no prospect whatever of such differences being resolved into harmony. Each section of the true Catholic Church has the way of regarding the others as heretics; but the most real heresy of all is that of the branch which, by gross abuse of the term 'Catholic,' claims to be the whole tree. The unfortunate blunder of the older Version of the Bible—wrongly called 'Authorized'—in this country, which misrepresents Christ as saying, 'There shall be one fold and one shepherd,' has misled the ignorant, and has been falsely employed by those who knew better, to enforce uniformity instead of unity. But the New Testament is plain enough, and the honest perception of mankind endorses the comprehensiveness of Christ's own declaration—'Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice.' The particular fold matters little to the genuine sheep. It must, however, be acknowledged that if there are any sheep outside every fold, they are both out of place and in danger. 'Diffused Christianity' may exist as really as electricity in the air, but it counts for little, and does less. The only Christianity that works is that which is enshrined in the churches, and any valid estimate of the worth of Christianity to the world must be drawn from what Christian churches are, and teach, and do. Hence the great upheaval, which is now in such tragic process, throws into vivid prominence once more the hackneyed question—'What are churches for?' In view of the present chaos, a plain answer seems demanded. Any attempt at reply must of necessity be twofold. From within the churches

issues the theoretical answer in the form of doctrine—the appeal to mind and heart on the ground of a real and needed Gospel to humanity. From without, in the open world, the answer comes as a valuation, a warranted expectation, and an estimate as to its realization. The real Christian problem for the world of to-day is to make clear the former, and respond in fact to the latter. How far is this being done?

(1) Concerning the message of Christianity to humanity as voiced by the churches, it is impossible to say anything new or even fresh, so vast has been the multitude of sermons, books, pamphlets, speeches, lectures, and other deliverances. The spiritual tragedy is that even yet, the world of mankind at large does not know what really is the meaning and purpose of Christ's Gospel. The strife of tongues and the conflict of creeds have naturally produced a confusion which has much more to do with modern 'indifference' to religion than is generally confessed. Nor can it be wondered at, when the extent to which the various sections of the Christian Church herein contradict one another is fairly taken into account. We need not enter upon a discussion of what are termed the 'fine points' of theology. It is more than sufficient to refer to main matters which have a practical bearing. What Christianity is to be to Europe and the world when the present miserable *mêlée* is over, will depend upon its unequivocal answer to such questions as here follow.

Are we warranted as rational beings in assuming the Christian Theism which not only asserts the existence of God, but His personality and character as portrayed in the New Testament? Do we rightly assume that men are morally responsible, seeing that from the religious side Calvinism, and from the irreligious side 'Determinism,' both logically involve the contrary? May we rely not only on the historicity of Jesus, but upon the representation of His character and teachings, His life, death and resurrection, as related in the four Gospels? If it may be assumed that Christian Theism, moral responsibility, and the substantial authenticity of the New Testament give us valid grounds for faith, are the churches on this basis giving the modern world of mankind a clear, harmonious, and impressive message—say, as a musical genius gives by means of an

orchestra, if he is permitted the use of musical technique? Certainly he will not, and he need not, produce an oratorio in unison, but there will be no persistent clash of discords, tending only to confusion. There may be, as the apostle reminds us, 'many kinds of voices,' but are they, in the name of Christ's Gospel, giving the world of to-day unmistakable good-tidings, or a Babel of religious discords? What, for instance, are the 'common people'—the greatest number of individual human souls—to understand, on such far-reaching queries as these? Is the Church intended by its Founder to reach, influence, and save all men, or only a select few? In other words, is it the divinely appointed mission of the Church to Christianize the world, or to be an esoteric society consisting of a special body of believers picked out of lost mankind? Is its message to the world really one of comfort and hope, or of threatening and condemnation? Are *all* men, as such, the children of God, according to the teaching of Jesus, or not? Is human nature 'totally depraved' through 'original sin' and morally corrupt, or is the modification of such a notion which comes through the modern acceptance of evolution—with the influence of heredity and environment—to be acknowledged? What does 'salvation' really mean? Is it only, or mainly, 'going to a heaven' hereafter, or, if more than that, what more? This last especially because now and henceforth, more than ever before, the life and character and condition of each individual is indissolubly bound up with the lot of his fellows in a social, political, national, international relation, the influence of which is immeasurable. Assuming, again, that Christian 'salvation' means all the benediction that can be claimed for it, both here and hereafter, is it true that in order to such salvation the due 'administration of sacraments' by an episcopally ordained ministry is absolutely necessary?

Remembering the vast number both in this country and on the Continent—to say nothing of 'heathen lands'—who have no association with any church, and show little or no interest in religion at all, what is the message of Christianity as regards their destiny after death, to them, and concerning them? Whether they die on the battle-field or at home, in a slum or in a palace, is irrelevant. Does Christianity insist that for all such there is only the prospect of hopeless and

never-ending punishment, or may we, in any sense, cling to a 'larger hope' on their behalf? These inquiries may here suffice. There are others, but they may be waived. These cannot be waived. If the modern world is in any real sense to become Christian, these are the sincere and pressing queries which wait for unequivocal answers. Are they forthcoming? Alas, fidelity to truth compels us to own that they are not. Whether it be pleasing or displeasing to high-placed officials in the churches, whether Congresses and 'Mass Meetings' applaud or condemn, the fact remains that in regard to all these fundamental items of Christian faith, there is much contradiction between the churches, and more confusion amongst congregations that are attached to them. It would probably be no exaggeration to say that the greater part of those who attend Christian services do not really know what they believe, or why they believe it. As to helping, in any way or degree, towards bringing genuine conviction of the truth of Christianity home to the minds of those by whom they are daily surrounded, that never occurs to them. If it did, they could not respond to it.

That is one half of the real Christian after-war problem. And it will not be evaded by any amount of devotion on accustomed lines.

(2) The second half relates to facts even more than to doctrines. When an accomplished modern lecturer takes as the theme for a series of present-day utterances before influential audiences in Oxford—the most conservative and venerable centre of Christian faith in the world—'The Reproach of the Gospel: an Inquiry into the Apparent Failure of Christianity as a General Rule of Life and Conduct,' it stands to sense that there must be daily facts to suggest, if not to justify, such an indictment. What this candid though courteous teacher says concerning the Church's function—viz. 'To make the world Christian'—is significant enough:—

That we may be fit to take our part, there is one thing needful; if we are to help at all in making the world Christian, we must first be really Christians ourselves; and I fear there is no doubt that for most of us, for all except a very few, that means we must become Christians. If

we cling to the old values, and are content to rule our lives by the compromises and catchwords of worldly wisdom; if we are satisfied with ourselves and our standards—then we need conversion.¹

The test suggested is practical. It is no less true, and timely. In spite of all the disharmony and uncertainty which prevail in regard to Christian theology, there is such a thing, real, and sufficiently defined, as the Christian spirit. For all purposes of daily intercourse, alike between men and nations, the world knows well enough what is 'the mind of Jesus Christ.' But to know is not to do. Indeed, so far from being 'easy' is the 'yoke' He imposes, that the world which does not accept Him can hardly be expected to bear it. But Christendom does profess to accept Him and His ideals. If, then, He said concerning His followers, 'Ye are the light of the world,' modern humanity is warranted in looking to the Christian Church for the incarnation and exemplification of all the blessings which it declares 'accompany salvation.' Alas, no more in time of peace than now, is the expectation so met as to be convincing. If Christ's commands were obeyed as He insisted, and the Apostles afterwards entreated, then, as the inhabitants of modern Europe, we should be at peace where we are at war, and should be at war where we are at peace. Militarism would be at an end for ever; and social reform would never cease until, without respect of persons—all being equally the children of God—the greatest good of the greatest number would be secured in every land. How far we are from both these ideals, no words are needed to portray. Christianity, it is only too plain, was neither good enough nor strong enough to prevent the curse of this War. There are no signs that it is able to put an end to the infernal horrors that yet prevail. Is there any reason to hope that it may be able in the future to accomplish what it has failed to do in the past? Alas, even before Germany began to run amok, with the assistance of 'kultur' and science, there was occasion for an Anglican clergyman, neither a Radical nor a Socialist, to write thus concerning our peaceful commerce—in addition to what has been quoted above:—

¹ *Bampton Lectures for 1907*, p. 169.

We rightly pride ourselves that there is no slavery, or not very much, under the British flag. But what, if we look at it sincerely, are the conditions of casual and underpaid labour but slavery without its safeguards? The acknowledged slave was often well treated, clothed, and fed, and even maintained in his old age. But the free workers, slaves of penury, have not even the value of a chattel; they are absolutely dependent on employers, who too often cannot afford to treat them well, being themselves in bondage to the tyrant Competition. They cannot leave their miserable work, or if they do wander away it is only to find elsewhere conditions equally cruel and degrading; they have no claim on their masters, beyond a minimum payment for tasks actually done; and when they fall, weary and worn out, only destitution—or the 'workhouse'—awaits them. Even the last and vilest reproach of the slave system is not done away; for virtue, honour, purity, are as hard to keep for thousands of free women as they were for the veriest slave.¹

Of what country, one may surely ask, is this writer thinking? The South Sea Islands, or mid-African forests, or Siberian wastes? No; this is 'Christian' England; and fearful parallels may be found, at any time, in any of the nations now at war. Assuredly, then, the task of Christianity for the future, the real Christian problem, is twofold. It is to develop such a belief, and such conduct based on that belief, as shall put an everlasting end to the war-curse of the militarist, and at the same time shall engage every pacifist in a truceless war against everything that tends to blight and blast human lives. The desolation of Belgium is by no means the only Gehenna of civilization. The damnable atrocities of German Huns in that fair land, and the still worse (*sic*) barbarities of the Austrian savages in poor Serbia, are, after all, only more vivid, more lurid in attracting notice, than those wrought out under the euphemism of 'industrialism' in every great city in Europe. Huxley was no sentimentalist, yet even he declared, in his day, that—

Any one who is acquainted with the state of the

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

population of all great industrial centres, whether in this or in other countries, is aware that amidst a large and increasing body of that population there reigns supreme that condition which the French call *la misère*, a word for which I do not think there is any exact English equivalent. . . . I take it to be a mere plain truth that throughout industrial Europe there is not a single large manufacturing city which is free from a vast mass of people whose condition is exactly that described, and from a still greater mass who, living just on the edge of the social swamp, are liable by accident or illness to be precipitated into it.

Something like that must have been before the eye and heart of Morley Punshon, too, when he bade men find occasions for ' holy chivalry ' not on the battle-field, but

Where the famine-stricken languish,
 Pining through the hopeless years,
 Where grim laughter masks an anguish
 Far more terrible than tears,
 Where o'er all the fated city
 Sorrow's ceaseless sable hangs,
 Where the helpless wail for pity,
 Where the martyrs hide their pangs.

The real Christian problem of the future is to deal with the whole cruel tangle which a civilization oft professing but seldom following Christ, has brought us, as He would have His followers do. Assuming that we know His will, and leaving all necessary scope for the labours of statesmen, politicians, economists, and all other worthy teachers, the function of all the churches that merit the Christian name is clearly expressed in two main principles.

(1) They are bound in loyalty to their Lord to protest and insist that every human being, as a child of God, shall have both the right and the opportunity to live. This will, of course, include everything that is necessary for life, as distinguished from mere existence. All diplomatic considerations such as must ensue when this War is past, in regard to territorial divisions and national relations; all political arrangements whereby honourable citizenship may be secured;

all social reforms which are shown to be absolutely necessary on grounds of justice ; all means of bodily health and comfort ; all possibilities of sharing or fairly distributing those human enjoyments which are above the animal ; all these, and all they involve, are included in the right to live. Just as in a happy family all the children, whatever their temperament or capacity, are accounted worthy of a fair and ungrudged share of all the good things which belong to the home, so in the human family—which is God's family according to Jesus Christ—every one, without any exception, has a right to whatever opportunities of good this life affords. Whatever civilization, industrialism, politics, philosophy, science, may say or do, this right, wholly and always, is the Magna Charta of the Gospel, which it is at once the solemn duty and high privilege of the Christian Church, in all its branches, to proclaim.

(2) The second great function of a living and genuine Christianity, equally necessary with the first, is the larger and often even more difficult task of getting those who already possess all these advantages and opportunities, to use them aright. That is, not only for their own ennoblement, but for the profit and happiness of their fellows. That they should do so, would appear to be at once most natural and probable. But unfortunately both history and observation, corroborated too often by experience, show that such right use is the very last thing human nature generally does. It matters little practically how we express the 'something in this world amiss' of which our late Laureate spoke. Whether we call it moral evil, or wrong, or sin, is quite irrelevant. It is that in men and women which accounts for nearly all the suffering and misery of mankind in every age. Sir Oliver Lodge puts much truth into small compass in his definition of sin quoted above,¹ as

the deliberate and wilful act of a free agent who sees the better and chooses the worse, and thereby acts injuriously to himself and others. The root sin is selfishness.

So, when a modern sneerer at Christian faith asks, with an air of lofty contempt,

Let us look for an instant at the truest and best form of Christianity and ask what it is doing. *It is preaching*

¹ p. 26.

about Sin, Sin, Sin. It is praying to God to do for Man what Man *ought* to do for himself, what Man *can* do for himself, what Man *must* do for himself, for God has never done it and will never do it for him,¹

the words italicized may serve to emphasize, first, the inconsistency of an author who elsewhere in the same work declares that 'man can no more sin against God than a steam-engine can sin against the engineer who designed and built it.'² A steam-engine which 'ought,' and 'can,' and 'must,' act for itself, would indeed be a phenomenon. It may exist in the *Clarion* imagination, but nowhere else. Secondly, if the churches are 'preaching about sin'—they certainly are doing a great deal more real good that he conveniently ignores—then they are not only fulfilling their own true function, but are dealing with the greatest problem that affects human conditions and destiny. That problem has been sufficiently intense and complex through all the ages, but the enormous growth of populations, and ever-developing potentialities of civilization, have made it far more difficult now. Every human personality is a storm centre. Every human child represents a new force for good or ill in the world's history. As to-day we are staggered at the unprecedented numbers engaged in this War—millions have become as commonplace to us as thousands were to our fathers—so when the day of peace dawns upon this night of horrors, it will soon be seen that the most pressing, most decisive, questions of all, are but waiting for solution in vaster quantity and intenser quality than ever before. Whether we speak in theological language of 'redemption from sin,' or in ethical terms of the 'reformation of character,' matters little in view of humanity's tragic need. When those outside the Christian Church plead for 'higher-toned goodness,' it may well be accepted as synonymous with 'holiness.' The question of questions is, How is this elevation of character to be brought about, in ordinary humanity, so that in the years to come, both the war of the militarist and the war of the social reformer shall be alike unnecessary and impossible? The claim, and therefore the responsibility, of Christian churches is, and must ever be, that on the principles they represent,

¹ *God and My Neighbour*, by R. Blatchford, p. 183.

² p. 19.

these highest aims will be fulfilled more surely and speedily than in any other way. They have to show, as best they may, that the hope of Europe and the world, when the present direful sirocco is past, is in faithful acceptance of and obedience to the two Great Commands which Christ so endorsed, intensified, and amplified. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,' in His light, carries with it all that is needed for individual adhesion to the noblest personal ideals. 'Thou shalt love thy fellow man as thou lovest thyself,' involves, when Christ's followers are true to it, all the elements of an altruism which will leaven cities and nations alike with a new spirit, in which war will be no more, and selfishness, with all its ills, will be no more possible than midnight at midday. In regard to these two great words of humanity's greatest Teacher, the supreme lesson of the present crisis is, equally for Churches and the world, that he who does not keep them both, keeps neither.

One element especially in this supreme lesson calls for the final emphasis. The appeal here is unmistakably and impressively to the individual man. 'He who' is but the true echo to 'Thou shalt.' Perhaps this is the greatest lesson of all. It has become the fashion in to-day's philosophy and social ethics to decry individualism, as having failed practically, and as tending theoretically only to a morbid solipsism. There is some truth in the complaint, and a wholesome warning may be based upon it. None the less, in the end, the stress laid upon the individual by the Bible, in Old and New Testament alike, is abundantly justified. The value put upon each man in the modern methods of recruiting to which a direful crisis has brought us, points significantly to the only way in which other forces of evil, greater than Prussian militarism, can be overcome. 'Slackers' are found quite as often in the religious as in the civic realm. The hope of the future, for Christianity no less than for this country, is in the fulfilment of the Apostolic ideal—'If any man accounts himself something when he is really nothing, he deceives himself. Rather, let each man test his own work, so that he may find his satisfaction in regard to himself alone, without comparison with his neighbour. For each man must bear his own inalienable load.'

IV

THE PROSPECTIVE CALL FOR CHRISTIAN
IMPROVEMENT

The preceding pages all involve two vast assumptions, viz. the truth of the foundations of Christianity, and the validity of its claim to be the supreme and final religion of humanity. These are quietly and comfortably taken for granted throughout Christendom, as represented inside the churches. They are as really, though with equal quietude, challenged, if not denied, by great numbers outside the churches. The actuality of this antithesis cannot be denied. The estimate of its significance varies. Every section of the Catholic Church asserts its own special validity, if not superiority, as a representation of Christianity. When difficulties arise through contact with the modern environment, too often the simplest plan of dealing with them is accounted the best, viz. not to answer the questions, but eject the questioner. If he does not conform to our 'standards,' cast him out. They must be right; he must be wrong—expel him. There is no need to repeat the names of those who, in bygone ages, have tragically illustrated this procedure. But it is by no means only ancient history. It is true that there have been gleams of Berean nobility,¹ and passing affirmations of rational fearlessness. As when the very first issue of the Wesleyan Methodist *Minutes of Conference* prints the following in large type on its opening page:—

What are we afraid of? Of overturning our first principles? If they are false, the sooner they are overturned the better. If they are true, they will bear the strictest investigation.

¹ Cf. Acts xvii. 11.

That attitude is assuredly as Christian as it is rational. But like some other such pronouncements, it has too often been 'more honoured in the breach than in the observance.' In all the churches to this hour, the doubter is regarded as dangerous, and the unbeliever is pronounced an 'infidel.' The man who assumes most and questions least, is accounted the highest type of believer.

Of course, whether in individuals or churches, the method of unquestioning assumption is by far the easiest. But it is correspondingly liable to be also irrational, cowardly, and useless for the modern world. Not only has it definite limits, but these have become during the last century increasingly manifest and emphatic. The strong avowals of the Free Church pulpit count for no more with the average man of to-day, than the *ipse dixit* of the priest, or the anathema of the Pope. The decisions and resolutions of Conferences, or Congresses, or Conventions, avail only for those who then are present, or are represented. The few lines grudgingly accorded them in the daily press pass unnoticed by the vast majority of readers. Certainly wholesale assumption confers transient impregnability. When reason, fact, truth, are ignored, or even defied—tradition, convention, orthodoxy, may, for a while, remain beyond all scrutiny, defiant of 'destructive' criticism. It would be utterly useless to discuss the Christian justification of 'ikons' with the Russian soldier. In vain to an Irish peasant would priestcraft be denounced. To call in question the Christian warrant or utility of vestments to the Anglican clergy, would be but wasted breath. Though not more so than to impeach many of the views and practices of the Free Churches in this country.

It may be freely acknowledged that nothing is easier, nor is anything more enjoyable, in the best sense, than the influences and associations of public worship reverently and sympathetically conducted. But they are manifestly quite inadequate for the 'conversion' of the modern world. They are invaluable for the maintenance of an esoteric society, or for the development of 'personal religion.' Nothing can be said against them, save this, that, to an unmeasured extent, they are neither appreciated by the great mass of men in modern Europe, nor are moulding our 'advanced' civilization

on really Christian lines. If, therefore, when the present international crisis is past, Christianity is to retain its hold, let alone win its widening way throughout the world, three great principles will have to be much more fully realized than heretofore.

(1) Christianity will have to be more truly reconciled with itself.

(2) It must be more manifestly correlated with modern knowledge.

(3) It will have to be more definitely and effectively applied to modern life.

Each of these principles merits earnest attention.

(1) Christianity is lamentably and mischievously divided. There are before the world of to-day four main representations of Christianity, each claiming to be the embodiment of the true Kingdom of Christ on earth, and more or less opposing, if not even denouncing, the others. The Romish Church exceeds all in the exclusive vastness of its assumptions. It not only proclaims its elected head the supreme vicegerent of Christ on earth, but arrogates to itself the name 'Catholic' for all its adherents, thereby intentionally indicating that it alone is the genuine and universal Church of Christ. Against this unwarrantable presumption the Greek Church has through all the ages strenuously protested, maintaining that both its 'orders' and its antiquity, no less than its doctrine, confer upon it at least equal validity. Again, the Anglican Church protests with quite as much sincerity and vehemence that it is 'the true Church'—without any regard to either Rome or Russia. Whilst it is too well known to need comment, that throughout these realms a large and influential body of Christians, formerly known as Nonconformists or Dissenters, now claim, as Free Churches, to present the principles of Christianity in their purest form to the men and women of to-day.

The differences between these great religious corporations are neither small nor insignificant—even when all the bitterness of bigotry is left out of account. Speaking theologically, they cannot all be true. If, indeed, the specific claims of any one of them are true, the others are, to that extent, false. So that if some way of reconciliation be not found, Christianity

is foredoomed to failure on the simple ground of self-contradiction. So long as the New Testament retains any value, the prayer of Christ Himself is unmistakable in its intention—'That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us.' But wherein can such oneness consist? In some respects the divisions of Christendom are as hopeless as they are pronounced. Intense oppositions based on equal intelligence and sincerity are simply irreconcilable. The Greek Church not only will not, but cannot, recognize the Pope and his hierarchy. The true Romish priest cannot accept Anglican orders. The Anglican clergyman cannot consistently accept non-episcopal ordination. The instructed Free Churchman cannot follow any one of these. What is left to constitute the Christian unity, without which not only is Christ's own word flatly contradicted, but the hope of impressing the modern world is as surely lost as any chance of victory to an army divided against itself? The only hope seems to be the much fuller acknowledgement and development of the principle of reality in non-uniformity. 'Nonconformity,' instead of being a term of reproach as a token of wicked 'schism,' is the genuine hall-mark of the only unity that is either Christian or possible. The older English Version of the Bible is responsible here for no little mischievous misunderstanding, as hinted above. The average believer may be forgiven, but surely not the educated clergyman, for not knowing that Jesus never said concerning His Church—'And there shall be one fold and one shepherd.' His word is as plain as the future outlook based on it is alike possible and attractive. The only living unity in the Christian realm, as in that of nature, is that which consists of variety. That is the only hope. It would be very difficult to express that hope better than in one more quotation from the noteworthy Bampton Lectures already referred to. Knowing the attitude not seldom taken by other representatives of his Church, these words of a distinguished Anglican clergyman come with all the greater emphasis:—

Let me end, then, by setting or trying to set before you my vision of the days that are coming—a vision which, I trust, is not altogether fancy. I see the rise of a

new religious order, the greatest that the world has known, drawn from all nations and all classes, and what seems stranger yet, from all churches. Its members bear no distinctive habit; no distinctive name, if it be not the humble name of 'disciples.' Yet they are known to each other, and their knowledge is strength, for they are all the men and women who are not afraid to confess Christ, both with their lips and in their lives. Their rule is brief and simple; it has but two clauses, 'Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.' Their common creed is a belief in the Person of Christ, and in His power to make men like Him. In their common worship they are united in spirit, though not, it may be, in place or ritual. Each is loyal to the Church which brings his soul nearest to God; yet does not judge his brother who finds another way the best. For they have learned that God, who is one, fulfils Himself in many ways, and that the bond that joins them is stronger than the outward symbols which divide them.¹

In face of such a vision, one cannot but exclaim, '*O si sic omnes!*' If only all who 'profess and call themselves Christians' shared these sentiments, hope for the Christian future would burst out like the buds of spring. Well may the seer of this vision add—'And as I look, it seems to me that their brotherhood has changed the aspect of the world.' That is just what Jesus said—'That they may all be one—that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me.' The modern world does not believe that. If it did, its aspect would be changed indeed. Europe would then never have been, nor ever be again, a hellish mixture of battered ruins and ghastly shambles, but the garden of the Lord, where all that is bright and beautiful would form the ennobling environment of His happy children. When, and how, will the Christian unity be compassed, which shall so mightily contribute to that end? If we are to judge from some recent religious alterations, it would appear to be yet only a far-off vision. But the horrors of this War have at least enforced one contributory lesson. On the battle-field our ecclesiastical differences hide

¹ p. 198.

their heads for very shame, and the nominal distinctions which remain avail nothing against the heart-harmony of chaplains, any more than against the tender and eager co-operation of all Christian workers, for the comfort of both soul and body of the wounded or dying. But if there can be living and loving unity in face of the deadly dangers which accrue from war, why not also in the pains and sorrows, the struggles and wrongs, which belong no less really to times of peace? This truth at least emerges out of the very midst of the blood and fire of war, that whatever else is right, bigotry is wrong. Whatever may or may not be Christian, narrow-minded religious conceits and shallow-hearted orthodox pride are unchristian. The Apostle's figure holds good for evermore. There may be differences of feelings, convictions, judgements, preferences, between true disciples, as real and abiding as between the various members of a human body. But if instead of co-operation there is conflict, if instead of one function supplementing another, there is bitter jealousy and opposition, there can be but one possible end. Such a body will die and disappear. So too will a bitterly divided Christianity deservedly perish, leaving only a dishonoured grave to commemorate its failure.

(2) In whatever form and with whatever spirit Christianity abides, if it is to influence the present and coming generations, it will have to be honestly correlated with modern knowledge. All too often, even yet, such a reminder is met with a pious sneer at the uncertainty, or confusions, or mistakes, of what is accounted knowledge in these days. Science is said to be full of blunders, philosophy befogged, literature misleading. For the reality of the lie in such half-truth, reference must be made to other occasions. It is not suggested that Christian churches should be scientific schools, or philosophic seminaries. Minor details may be left to individual conviction. But there are certain great and fundamental matters in which, if Christianity is to appeal to the men of to-day, it must learn to appreciate their thoughts and speak their language. Whether Christian faith be orthodox or heterodox, sacerdotal or Erastian, it must be rational. And the rational must be modern. Now, as ever, faith must rest upon valid foundations; but in order to be valid, these must be true. And in order

to be true, these must be modern. This does not say that all that is ancient is false. But the human discovery and appreciation of truth, whether as to religion or aught else, must vary from age to age, as inevitably as the child's conception of life changes in the degree in which it puts on manhood. Nothing is more pitiful in the whole great realm of religion, than to see men and women clinging with blind obstinacy to untenable conceptions of the past, just because their fathers held them. Long-cherished beliefs may be too venerable to be lightly set aside. But to say that they must never be examined, let alone corrected, is but childishness so mischievous that no man thinks of following it in anything but religion. Alas, in this sphere, only too many never do anything else. The plain speech of Dr. Washington Gladden across the Atlantic is not one whit too strong hereupon :—

The notion that theology can be tied up to one set of formulas ; that the explanations of religious truth which were made one hundred years ago, or fifteen hundred years ago, are complete and sufficient, needing no revision and no enlargement, seems to me a flat and flagrant and even contemptuous denial of the one sublime and vital truth of religion—the fact of God's constant presence in the world and of the leadership of His Spirit, in our study of His truth.

We have the same essential verities to deal with that Augustine and Calvin and Wesley had, only these facts have been marvellously multiplied and extended ; the universe in which we live is a vastly greater universe than that of which they knew ; and we are compelled by our enlarging knowledge of God and man, of nature and the supernatural, to give very different explanations of the things we know, than those which sufficed for them.¹

We have to acknowledge many tragic failures from the Christian ideal around us, not only in war but in peace, in nations no less than in individuals. In regard to all these, the customary assumption is that all the reasons and all the responsibility rest with sinners, none with saints. That is to say,

¹ *Present-Day Theology*, pp. 9, 15.

Christianity, which is veritably a way of salvation for humanity, a panacea for all the woes and evils of civilization no less than of savagery, is by the churches so perfectly apprehended, so truthfully presented, so nobly exhibited, that all the blame for its large failure, and for the wars, sins, sorrows, sufferings, which ensue, rests upon those who reject it. In a word, moral depravity is the root-cause of all unbelief, and of what follows from it.

But very little honest thought suffices to show that this estimate is not true. It is false alike to principle and to fact. Organized Christianity must ever rest ultimately upon a theological basis. That basis is the work of men. Good men and true undoubtedly, but only men, and therefore not infallible. Nor could their work be final. The religious notion of a theological system—often represented as ‘the faith once for all delivered to the saints’—settled for ever in the fourth or eighteenth centuries, with thenceforth nothing to add, nothing to subtract, nothing to alter, nothing to improve, is but a childish delusion. Cast-iron ‘standards’ of doctrine no more truly represent the meaning or worth of the Gospel of Christ to modern men, than the old coaches along Roman or turnpike roads constitute the present methods of travelling. The advances in human knowledge since the Council of Nicea are simply immeasurable. Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, all served their generation nobly according to the light they had. But we have more than they, in every realm of human life.

Nor is that all. For it is abundantly manifest that the newer light is not confined to a few cloistered cells or sequestered colleges. It is not kept sacredly secret in the minds of an intellectual oligarchy. It is diffused abroad in such a way as the world has never before known. Ever since 1870, in our own country, the great purpose and effect of modern education have been to train ‘the common people’ through their children, to share with experts all latest information on any and every subject. Is it possible for such a leavening process to go on for half a century without producing definite and potent effect? That effect is aptly termed ‘the modern atmosphere.’ It may be as difficult to define as the air is to see. But it is no less real and inevitable. We breathe it

or die. There is no other alternative. Moreover, whether the Christian churches have adapted themselves to this new environment or not, the world of mankind has. This generation could not if it would, and would not if it could, go back to the mental environment of the eighteenth century, let alone the fourth. Hence there are only two courses open for Christian believers, either as individuals or as churches. They may remain determinedly content, under the plea of 'walking in the old paths,' and 'holding fast the traditions which they have been taught,' with all the old dogmas which seemed so true to our fathers, and, as a result, isolated from the world of actual life, an esoteric society as uninfluential on all the surrounding currents of thought or being as the Sandemanians to whom Faraday belonged, or the Plymouth Brethren. Or, they may become a living, working, purifying leaven, even as Christ Himself said, by accepting new truth and shedding old errors, thus putting themselves on the same mental and moral plane as their human environment.

How this definitely applies to the most vital matters of Christian faith cannot here be considered in detail. It is enough to say that, speaking generally, there is pressing need for an improved, and so far altered, Christianity, both in doctrine and practice. It is conceded everywhere that average Christian character greatly needs to be brought into closer conformity with the New Testament ideal. But as to doctrine, each distinctive section of the Catholic Church clings to the belief that its particular tenets so faithfully and permanently represent the real mind of Jesus Christ that nothing more can be required than to be true to its 'standards.' A short time since one of the best known preachers in the 'Evangelical' Churches avowed in public, evidently with much satisfaction, that he had 'proclaimed the gospel' to more people than any other man, and that everywhere he 'found that the old Gospel held the field.' But apart from the fact that in preaching quantity is not the same as quality, such affirmations are very misleading. The 'old Gospel' is as ambiguous as 'holding the field.' If the old Gospel means the evangelical representations of the nineteenth century—to go no farther back—which 'field' does it hold? Certainly not modern life; as this country testifies. Still less does it hold Europe

or the rest of the world ; as all travellers well know. Such affirmations are, of course, sincerely intended to strengthen the confidence of believers ; but the suggestion that the old Gospel, i.e. the ' evangelical ' conceptions of Christian truth and ideals of Christian duty—as held, say, by Moody, or Spurgeon, or Wesley, or Calvin, or Luther—are everywhere triumphant, is no more true than that on the present battle-fields of Europe the old weapons ' hold the field.' It is true and trite that we cannot do without wood and iron and copper and steel, in such warfare, any more than our fathers. But the most impressive lesson of this whole terrible business has been the fearful efficiency, and therefore absolute necessity, of new combinations of these elements. All the wars of old have been waged on land or sea. But none, until now, have found their deadliest opportunities of destruction in mid-air, or beneath the waves, or in clouds of choking poison wind-wafted with more murderous effect than any guns. No one calls in question the bravery of Nelson or the skill of Wellington. But of what avail to-day would either be, or both combined, if our troops were only armed with the old Brown Bess, or supplied with such guns as subdued the Indian Mutiny ? Do the old methods of warfare ' hold the field ' in any one respect ? We know not only that they do not, but that they never will. No more does the old evangelism hold the modern world. It was well and truly pointed out by Dr. Selbie at the recent Wesleyan Conference at Leeds, that even for Methodism John Wesley's sermons are to-day inadequate ; just as the present constitution of that Conference, with its host of lay representatives, is departure enough from ' the old paths ' to make such venerable worthies as Dr. Osborn and Dr. Bunting and the rest, turn in their graves. But their ideals, either of Christian doctrine or of church organization, will never return. Millions, it is said, of Spurgeon's sermons have been sold. But some of them, in which he expressed himself as sincerely as intensely, only nauseate this generation. No man now, however real his piety, dare echo that eminent Gospel preacher's avowal—' I believe in predestination, without any cutting or trimming.' Nor will there be many, if any, followers of a popular London ' divine,' recently returned to his native American home, who

whilst here declared that he knew of 'no more damnable doctrine than the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men.' The whole case may be presented as truthfully as plainly, however, by another well-known American leader of Christian thought, when he says :—

This generation needs to have the highest and best thought of the day on the great themes of the religious life ; but when these subjects are presented in the form in which they were presented fifty years ago, they fail to produce conviction in the minds of men ; they cannot be believed. In many pulpits they are so presented ; and although those who receive their instruction sometimes accept it because their fathers and mothers accepted it, and because nothing better has been offered them, it is apt to result in spiritual tragedies when those who have been misled by it find their way out into other associations, and come into contact with the larger knowledge of which they have been kept in ignorance.

Painful cases often come under my notice of young men and women who have received their religious education in churches where the old ideas are still enforced with no modification, and who have found themselves confounded and bewildered by the utter impossibility of reconciling these ideas with other demonstrated truths of which they have been put in full possession.

What right has any minister of the gospel to send out young men and women from his church into the world in such a benighted condition, liable to be wrecked in their religious thinking as soon as they come in contact with the living and constructive thought of their generation ? If he is so stupid, or so ignorant, or so cowardly that he cannot find out and deliver the truth that God is revealing to the world to-day, let him get out of the pulpit. A coal-mine would furnish him a more fitting environment, and a far more useful occupation.¹

(3) Christianity, when the War is over, will have to be more definitely and effectively applied to our whole modern life.

¹ *Present-Day Theology*, Dr. Washington Gladden, pp. 3, 5.

In all practical relationships as surely as in the world of mind, the environment of this generation is immeasurably different from that of even the nineteenth century. A whole volume of no mean size would be required, to give anything like an account of the vast changes which have come to pass and are still proceeding in the political, social, industrial, domestic, conditions of the people of these realms—to go no farther. The swiftest enumeration alone is possible here. Still, all the following have to be borne in mind, for they intensify and complicate immeasurably the Christian problems of the future beyond the War. First comes the vast increase in population. For statesmen and politicians this is a serious matter, even if Malthus be ignored. But it is far more so for Christian churches, because from their standpoint each individual in all the millions is not merely a human personality, but a moral being and an immortal soul. The gross inequalities, real and immeasurable, between the life-conditions of the majority of these millions as compared with the minority, are now more pronounced than ever. The facts in regard to the existence of the 'submerged tenth' are appalling. Nothing has contributed more to the social problems involved than the incalculable development of machinery; for by its means has come to pass the enormous increase in factory life, along with the inevitable multiplication of all kinds of subdivided 'piece-work,' so good for the work, but often so bad for the worker.

Yet it is manifestly not only in the realm of production, that modern competition compels the adoption of every method which will economize cost and perfect the finished article. In the equally vast realm of distribution, the tendency is, inevitably, to neglect the human factor and consider only or mostly the requirements of 'business.' The development generally of modern 'industrialism' into unchecked competition is fraught with consequences so far-reaching and oppressive that it is becoming intolerable. Whether technical Socialism be welcomed or despised, it is certain that some modification of the existing system will have to be adopted in the near future. The general social 'unrest' has become a commonplace, and it is simply impossible now and henceforth to silence the growing demand of the majority in our modern

populations, for a fairer share in those comforts and delights of life which are enjoyed by the minority. The old course of Roman history, as already hinted, is repeating itself. First came the unchallenged rule of the Patricians. Then, slowly but surely, the progress of the Plebeians ; until their day of final triumph. So in these days there is no mistaking the fact that Democracy has not only come to stay, but come to rule. And Mr. Kidd is well warranted in saying that it will be a new Democracy. Even if his estimate of its ethical character were too high, no one can deny that since 1870 the intellectual development of this country has advanced as never before. It is not merely a case of the diffusion of general knowledge. University Extension schemes and Technical as well as Secondary schools, have brought the very latest and best results of modern science and history and literature within the reach of the poorest. Almost every year sees improvements in method and farther extension of opportunities. Meanwhile the practical application of technical knowledge is transforming the face of the country. It is not yet a century since railways were born, and thought to be a doubtful, if not dangerous, experiment. Now, not only is the whole world covered by them as by a network of steel, but under the ground and over the seas such facilities for travel exist as the boldest speculators of fifty years ago would never have dreamed possible. This very War which is cursing Europe with its carnage is bringing into fullest exercise the expert knowledge which makes the most dreaded enemies to be those beneath the waters, or overhead amongst the clouds. Even in times of peace, there is less and less of rest. Half the modern world, including women and children, seems almost to live on the railway. The ancient villager who was 'rooted to the soil' is a phenomenon of the past. The whole world is in motion, and becomes more cosmopolitan every year.

One effect of the ever-multiplying facilities for travel is to give us the double problem of congested cities and depleted villages, with all the associated difficulties in housing and in agriculture. The injustices of our present land laws find their evil crown in the 'unearned increment,' which in our

growing cities makes it possible for the few to enrich themselves, as enormously as iniquitously, out of the labours of the many. So Huxley's words above quoted remain an unmeasured tragedy, in spite of the happily growing efforts of corporations and municipalities to relieve city problems by multiplied Bye-laws. All too well we know that the war avalanche which is now upon us will do nothing while it lasts to relieve any social anxieties, or bring comfort and hope to human lives. Rather is it causing chaos in all departments of our life, as well as threatening to overwhelm us with yet greater difficulties, when international peace makes it equally possible and necessary to enter upon readjustment.

But there are also many other factors and influences in our modern life which must come into fair and full consideration when any Christian estimate is attempted. The old-time question as to which was the more influential, pulpit or press, has been long settled in favour of the press. The notion that 'the pulpit is played out' is, of course, only the false imagining of such as wish it might be so. Still, it were vain to dispute the plain fact that it is the printing-press which rules. The influence of our daily newspapers is incalculable, irresistible. When to these is added the marvellous issue of cheap magazines, with the ever-growing multitude and constant cheapening of valuable books, it is manifest beyond question that this age is like no other the world has ever known, in bringing knowledge of all kinds to bear upon the minds and hearts and lives of men throughout every grade of society. The moral and religious, as well as intellectual, effect of this continually growing flood upon the rising generation, is, of course, vast beyond calculation. The modern rush for amusements of all kinds often forms the subject of lamentation from some quarters; and no one can deny its great increase during recent years. Football has become a national craze; cricket and tennis cease only with the weather. Music halls, Theatres, and the phenomenally increasing Picture-Palaces, never cease. But such recreations, even if they do tend to excess, are by no means tokens of ill. As a reaction from the wearying monotony of piece-work and shop life, they are as useful as natural. Certainly no man

and no church will stop them. Except for the drink and gambling inseparable from most races and much football, there is little to cause objection, thanks to the general refinement of feeling and elevation of moral tone which have come to pass during recent years. The schoolmaster has not been abroad for nothing. Nor have the churches preached and pleaded and worked in vain. In spite of all the social and civil wrongs which yet obtain, the sense of justice is keener throughout the whole community than ever before; the sacredness of individuality, irrespective of wealth or position, was never so pronounced; the general respect for human life, the ever-increasing efforts to ward off disease, to provide by means of insurance for all who suffer or are liable to accident, to protect women and children, and to bring about in town and country alike something like a fairer distribution of life's possible amenities—these all evince an upward development which even the curse of war will not pervert. Nay, rather, out of its very inferno we see emerging a more tender and practical sympathy, a genuine human brotherhood and sisterhood, which yield no small compensation for present and transient miseries.

All this is only a summarizing reminder, but it may here suffice. The real reason for passing it before the mind, with the distinct understanding that it points to a veritably new age and has no preceding parallel in our world's history, is, that when the bewildering and engrossing turmoil which now surrounds us ceases, all this living complexity, and all it connotes, will have to be taken into most serious consideration by men of religion, quite as frankly and fully as by those who deal with politics or sociology. If Christianity is to be in any real degree the light of the modern world, the total human environment will have to be taken into account, and justice done to all the elements in our 'whole spirit and soul and body' which to-day as in Paul's time still constitute human nature, but are now subject to influences and characterized by needs of which he could have no conception.

The main principles of the New Testament, indeed, are plain enough; the difficulty lies in their application. Every one knows, for instance, that it is only quite recently that

Christian churches have, as such, shown any interest in social reform. Even now, many profess to regard it as outside their spiritual programme. It is not so long since all matters relating to the condition of the 'masses,' and indeed to the physical and social wellbeing of the people, were pronounced 'secular.' The whole mission of Christianity was said to be to save men from drifting on to eternal punishment. Such 'otherworldliness' has, however, during the last half-century been largely discredited, and 'salvation' has come to have a nearer and more mundane significance. It is remarkable that whilst religion is coming to work ever more earnestly for a Kingdom of Heaven here 'at hand,' and leave the future to a reverent agnosticism, science is being moved to pay much more heed to the non-physical side of human nature, and to seek with growing earnestness for some valid proofs that death does not end all. The Christian hope of immortality in all its preciousness does not depend on such proofs. But it cannot despise the certainty that in religion as truly as in nature, or science, or civilization, only that which lives and grows, in any real sense 'holds the field.' The distinctive and supreme hope of Christianity lies in the truth that it stands for a life, not a creed; a growth in the perception and application of truth, not a cast-iron system. Life expresses itself through growth, in adaptation to environment. Where that fails in nature, death takes the place of life. It is no less true in religion. This whole frightful calamity which is now upon Europe is tragically conveying the same lesson. It is the very essence of our only hope of victory. Time was when in battle muscular strength, or skill in the use of weapons, or personal prowess, decided the day. But not now.

For beyond all the deepest acknowledgements of the bravery and devotion of our soldiers and their Allies, rises the insistent, irrepressible demand for the most modern guns and ammunition. 'More shells and yet more,' is the daily dreadful cry. The one certainty so absolute that no one for a moment dreams of questioning it, is that the weapons and methods of even half a century ago, would be worse than useless in France or Egypt to-day. Waterloo Day may well bring its reminder of the heroism of the victors on that field.

But no sane man, let alone wise soldier, ever thinks of copying their ways or using their weapons. War is horrible indeed, but it exhibits the keenest working of the human brain and the wisest possible adaptation of means to ends. That is one at least of its main lessons for religion. Christianity has a larger and harder campaign to maintain in this world than all that confronts the Allies. It has a far sterner task than the crushing of arrogant Prussian militarism. If the conquest of the modern world for the Kingdom of Christ is to be seriously attempted, nothing will avail, alike for Christian doctrine and practice, save such adaptation to environment as will both gather up all the best of the past and leave the rest behind. There need be no dispute as to which of the two is the more important, the theoretical or practical, the theological or the social. This only it is necessary to recognize without flinching, that judgement must come before emotion ; thought before action ; and conviction before devotion. If thought be clear and conviction deep, action and devotion may be trusted to take care of themselves. However much temperaments may vary, and whatever value may attach to intuition, the first appeal of religion, now as ever, is to the mind. As a matter of fact, even where heart is said to rule most completely, there is always and necessarily a basis of judgement. No woman, no child, no audience, would be moved by emotional appeal, if there were not the assumption that the grounds of the appeal were true. If it were only made clear that the latest critical craze from Germany is justified in its assertion that the Jesus of the Gospels never existed, is it credible that emotional 'experience' would suffice for the maintenance, let alone development, of Christianity?

The testimony of history is to the same effect. When all justice is done to mystics and revivalists, the men who have moved the world most towards Christian principles, have been men of mind. Paul, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, like Christ Himself, made their first appeal to 'whatsoever things are true.' 'Why even of yourselves do you not decide what is right?'—He asked of those whom He sought to move. There is nothing sadder in all history than the record of the mistakes that have been made, the wrongs done, the

cruelties perpetrated, under the impulse of convictions which in themselves were false. To-day we have the most flagrant and repulsive illustration in the appeal of the Kaiser to his Bible, with that of University Professors of Theology, to justify the wicked falsity, the outrageous lying, the unspeakable atrocities, with which the German Government precipitated and maintain this awful War. If their conduct were rightly based upon the Bible, then the world would do well to burn every Bible within reach. If Christianity were responsible for their murders and outrages, their devilish gas, their poisoning of wells, and squirting fire, then Christianity ought to perish at once and for ever under human execration.

When the whole present case is considered from the Christian standpoint, the prospective improvement needed to create any valid hope of large development after the present misery is past, unmistakably demands three things: clearer and deeper conviction, truer and worthier Christian character, more comprehensive and actual application to daily human life.

There are really three great spheres for such development of real religion; but these are so distinct that the specific items in which change for the better is required, would vary considerably in each case. Great Britain, Europe, and the Mission Field, differ vastly as areas for Christian faith and practice. We cannot here give to the two latter the special attention they merit. They will be duly considered elsewhere; and, after all, it cannot be denied that this country is the most typical and influential of all the nations which make any profession of adhesion to the Christian faith. If only Britain were Christian indeed, the influence for the highest on the rest of the world would be simply immeasurable. It is real comfort in our present tragedy that the whole tireless lying propaganda of the German Government, both in Europe and America, has not succeeded in blinding the world as to the attitude of Britain, both before and since the War began. For our part, we may avow boldly before all humanity, that so far as any war can ever be Christian, this War has been, from the beginning until now, conducted upon Christian principles. The pietistic and unwarranted extremes of

' Pacifism ' are here intentionally left out of account. Their persistent attempt to monopolize the title to Christianness, is on every ground unjustified. Just now, especially, they do but illustrate for the thousandth time the possible mischief of misguided sincerity. The principles which would, under the plea of ' Christian non-resistance,' allow a nation mad with pride and greed to perpetrate on all other nations such devilries as they have been shown quite ready to do, no more deserve to be accounted Christian, than the vile deeds which they would permit.

Assuming, as we have a right to do, that thus far, however lamentable the necessity for our share in fighting an evil monster, there has been no violation of Christian principles, there will be at the close of the War no more need for repentance, than there was at the beginning for a day of humiliation. The cost of devotion to holy duty and the highest ideals, is assuredly no reason for shame. What is needed, therefore, in the name of religion, when we think of the days to come, is not mourning and false penitence, but thankfulness conjoined with improvement. There is no room to doubt that, on soldiers and civilians alike, the influence of this great world-tragedy has at least been sobering. Even if it were conceded—though there is no sufficient reason for so doing—that the actual effect on the fighting force, as reported by many chaplains, is overestimated spiritually, yet the good influences enumerated above as associated with the struggle remain, and do at least tend in the Christian direction. Hence, the right attitude for all who desire to see the kingdom of Christ advancing amidst modern humanity, is one of chastened hope and conditional optimism. The hope is chastened by remembrance of past failures and present imperfections. The optimism is conditioned by all the manifest need for a new and true Evangelism, which shall be at once a better Christianity and a more real Gospel for the men of this and coming generations. What the world's heart, sick as it is of suffering and wrong, aches for, is an Evangel which shall not only make all wars for the future as impossible as a murderous fight in a happy family, but shall so regenerate civilization that civic, social, national life shall become just such a happy family on the larger scale,

instead of the menagerie life to which ruthless competition under the euphemism of 'industrialism' has brought us.

How vast, how difficult, how complex, is the need thus suggested, no words are adequate to show. But if the main truth be grasped that the greatest need of all is clear, deep, worthy, conviction—other matters being waived—then the basis of all that is to constitute a nobler Christian faith will have to be sought and found in the teaching of the churches concerning some half a dozen great foundation matters of belief. What does Christianity really stand for, as it appeals to modern humanity, in regard to God, Man, Christ, the Bible, Sociology, Eschatology? That is to put it summarily and technically, yet truly. For it is men's thoughts upon these things that determine the nature of their religion, or, indeed, whether they will have any religion at all.

One can easily and sympathetically understand the alarm which will come to many sincere but uninstructed believers, when they are told, ever so gently and carefully, that an improved theology is needed, or that the Christian doctrine to which they have been accustomed needs revising and restating. The very suggestion of it provokes, one knows only too well, the usual crop of vehement protests in religious journals. Not only, however, is the alarm quite uncalled for, seeing that the case is one of evolution, not revolution, but it cannot be too plainly stated that there is no alternative. The old tradition about Canute, whether it be fact or not, is a true representation of the situation. The rising tide of modern thought and feeling is absolutely resistless. That is the first great lesson to be learned, and until that is recognized, there is no hope of influencing, let alone 'saving,' the modern world. The world of to-day is not, will not be, cannot be, content with the theology of yesterday, any more than with its science or sociology. But because of the resistlessness of the law of progress, are the men of science, are social reformers, smitten with panic, or given to rancorous lamentations? We know that they are not. In not a few respects the men who do not deal with religious subjects have set an example to those who do. Fearless honesty, thorough-going scrutiny, willingness to acknowledge error, determination to follow the truth wherever it leads, calm

courage in facing any consequence from so doing—these all have characterized numbers of earnest workers in the varied realms of modern thought and action. Berean nobility of mind has been found more often amongst men of the world than of the Church. But the most timid believers ought surely to be rid of their fears, if only they can be brought to face the actual situation. Can it be other than clear to the least instructed mind, when also sincere, that the substitution of what is true for what is false, must be real gain? When it is definitely understood that nothing that is true need be let go, is there any ground for alarm? May not every sane and sensible mind be expected to acknowledge the possibility of both learning new truths as generations come and go, and of recovering old truths which have been forgotten or ignored? At all events, if Christ Himself is to count for anything as the expounder of His own Mission, His ideal is unmistakably expressed—‘So then every teacher who has been properly trained for the Kingdom of Heaven, is like a steward set over a household, who brings forth out of his storehouse things both new and old.’

V

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPMENT

It will doubtless be asked, either with cynical pietism or sincere concern, what is meant when we speak of evolution, or development, or alteration, or improvement, in regard to Christian faith. It is, unfortunately, as easy for the disciples of the old to despise the new, as for the advocates of the new to scorn the old. Both attitudes are contrary to 'the mind of Christ.' The full and detailed answer to the query, 'What do you mean by development?' cannot be compressed into any one statement, or be satisfactorily drawn from any one source. It is the sum-total, in religion as in science, of all the labours of sincere and competent contributors. It must, therefore, be rather left for volumes than attempted in pages. But something may be done in short space, and something must be done if, when the War is over, a new and living faith is to emerge from the hell of horrors on the Continent, or from the Gethsemane of sorrow and cruel bereavement in each of the conflicting nations. As a modest contribution to a better understanding which shall worthily set forth Christian beliefs and sanctions before the world that then will most pitifully need them, let us glance in swift brevity at the general principles involved, resting as they do on the great foundation truths which constitute the very pith and marrow of Christianity. Some repetition of what has already been suggested is here inevitable. The gravity of the present crisis must be sufficient apology.

Without any pretence whatever to cover the whole case, the following would seem to be at all events main features in which Christianity needs alteration for the better, if it is to be the world-religion which its devotees claim for it. Let it be distinctly noted that no slur is hereby put upon the past. It is only pointed out that the present differs from the past.

The very essence of the nobility of some of our Christian predecessors lies in the fact that they were men like 'the children of Issachar' of old, 'that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.' In other words, they appreciated their environment, and adapted themselves to it. For that reason they departed from the beaten tracks of their day. Paul, Luther, Wesley, were all innovators, in this true sense. But their Master was even more pronounced than they, in setting aside that which through age had become effete, so as to inaugurate 'a new and better covenant.' 'It was said in old time . . . but I say unto you'—was not seldom the very basis of the reality of Christ's good-tidings. It was also an example of that true and necessary development which every notable disciple who has helped on His kingdom has unflinchingly followed. Christ's reward was crucifixion. In lesser degrees it has also been that of His most faithful servants. The churches, scarcely less than the world, have their kisses for those who entertain them, their kicks for those who teach them. No man, it would seem, must expect, in any realm, thanks for his best efforts to teach what is true. Probably the real reason is the essential laziness of human nature, which does not want to be troubled with the pains of learning or unlearning, any more than little children are anxious to be washed. Yet somehow, somehow, and by some one, the cleaning or correcting process has to be undertaken, if health of either mind or body is to be attained. So have modern Christian churches to face certain great needs, both theoretical and practical, if they are to stand for the healing of the nations. Even such as here follow.

(1) Christianity in its presentation to the people must be truer, i.e. more in accord with what we know to be fact, alike in history and in science. It may be necessary here to say, clearly and emphatically, that to insist upon objective truth to the uttermost does not in the least disparage the intuitional or emotional elements of Christian faith. Neither of these is definable, but both are real. The facts of experience in Christian believing and living can no more be gainsaid than described. That experience, however, with all that it connotes, is not here the matter in hand. Our question is—How

can the witness of Christianity be so presented to the modern world as to evoke in men at least the desire to share the experience which Christian faith makes possible? The late Mr. Charles Watts, so well known as an anti-Christian lecturer, used often to say sarcastically that for him 'the peace of God passed all understanding.' But the phrase which he thus sought to ridicule has a genuine and deep significance which satire can no more lessen than an April shower blot out the sun. It were as sensible to say that music does not exist because there are some unfortunates who have no ear for it, as to assume that there is no actual and precious Christian experience because many do not share it. If the majority of Englishmen were colour-blind, the flowers and the rainbow would still exist for the minority. None the less would it be a mistake and a hindrance if, in presenting reasons for faith to the world of to-day, either the rainbow or the flowers were cited as proof of divine benevolence in the same way as our fathers did. Such an evidence would be simply untrue. Even if at first effective with young children or the uneducated, when these grew older or learned better, it would rather alienate than confirm them, to know that they had been so far misled. Misrepresentation is evil. It can never be allowed, from the Christian standpoint, to do evil that good may come.

Let us mention but three instances in which the times will call for a truer representation of Christian principles than has hitherto obtained, viz. as regards the origin of this our world, as to human nature, and touching the moral evil which Christianity calls 'sin.' It is no exaggeration to say that in the minds of myriads of Christian believers, as in the conduct of thousands of public services, that which is assumed in regard to these foundation matters, as the basis of appeal, is definitely contrary to the truth. Take, for instance, the summary of modern knowledge hereupon given by Sir Oliver Lodge in his *Catechism for Parents* as to the relations of religion to science :—

What are you ?

I am a being alive and conscious upon this earth, a descendant of ancestors who rose by gradual processes

from lower forms of animal life, and with struggle and suffering became man.

What, then, may be meant by the Fall of man?

At a certain stage of development man became conscious of a difference between right and wrong, so that thereafter when his actions fell below a normal standard of conduct, he felt ashamed and sinful. He thus lost his animal innocence and entered on a long period of human effort and failure; nevertheless the consciousness of degradation marked a rise in the scale of existence.¹

Now let us look at this statement with a moment's honest scrutiny. Is this summary true? In the light of modern science there can be but one answer. It is. Then is this representation of the creation, and the 'fall' of man, that which is taught, either by avowal or implication, in the churches? Certainly it is not. Almost all the churches which make direct appeal to the people, Anglican, Romish, Free, whether Sacerdotal or Evangelical, unmistakably assume and sometimes definitely assert the contrary. It would be easy to mention names, especially in some cases where 'pushing' Pastors are brought from America. There, indeed, it has been not seldom taken for a manifestation of superior Christian devotion, to contradict as flatly and fully as possible all that Sir Oliver implies in his mild but firm statement. As a rule no notice is taken of this flagrant contradiction. Those who do not know better, applaud the Pastor's zeal. Those who do, say nothing. But the prevalent idea that the modern world outside the churches—which world, it is assumed, ought to be Christianized—takes no notice of this attitude of representative believers, is pitifully mistaken. Not only the man in the street, but the man who stays at home to read instead of attending church services, and the young people who are sent ever more and more assiduously to schools which are nothing if not modern, these all may not say much. But they think the more.

The plain statement, again, that the first eleven chapters of Genesis are neither exact science nor literal history, is one which, however true, is still repudiated as dangerous, if not

¹ *The Substance of Faith Allied with Science*, p. 128.

deadly, doctrine by almost all the churches, in spite of the many efforts of Evangelical scholars to explain the true state of the case.

Again ; some thirty odd years ago, a new translation of the Bible was given to English-speaking people. Neither perfection nor finality was claimed for it. But it was shown to be definitely truer than the older Version—which is so persistently, though falsely, called the 'Authorized.' Has that fact, which is beyond dispute in numberless instances, procured for it acceptance and use in Christian churches? Far from it. In the 'church as by law established' probably not one lectern in a hundred holds it, although one of the most saintly and scholarly of recent Bishops showed plainly before his death both that the Anglican Church was at liberty to adopt it, and would be greatly the gainer by so doing. In the Free Churches it is only slowly taking the place of the Jacobean Version. That in many and important instances it points to the truth as against error, is beyond dispute. But truth is held to be secondary to style, and rhythm is put before reality. Even educated men are still content to read to congregations that 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned,' which—in the language of to-day—is a coarse misrepresentation, much more calculated to drive thoughtful men away from Christianity than win them to it.

Once more ; let us call to mind the fact that in almost all occasions for Christian worship, hymns are used. That is to say, congregations are expected to join in making great assumptions and assertions more emphatic by means of the help which music affords. Now if these assertions are true, and if the assumptions are valid, the singing of hymns, anthems, and canticles, cannot but be a powerful incentive to Christian development. No one will question the forcefulness of the appeal to our highest emotions which hearty or beautiful singing is capable of making. But what if the substance of that which is sung is not true? Does it matter? We know that at concerts the very last thing considered is the truth or falsity of the words employed. Whether what is sung is real or imaginary is altogether immaterial. Is that, then, also the case in Christian worship? If we are to be honest, there is but one

answer. It is—to an extent which is only apprehended by those who are willing to face not merely the facts, but the obloquy which will attach to any one who calls attention to them. Yet there are ample reasons for so doing. For besides the severer mental training, compelling them to think, to which our young people are now subjected, this War has driven and is driving men in general to seriousness in thought and carefulness in speech, probably more than any event in the history of Europe. If they are to be ‘won for Christ,’ it will assuredly be necessary to meet them on the same plane of reality, in the assumptions and assertions which, in worship, we ask them to endorse, as in the science or politics or literature of the week. A careful scrutiny of the hymn-books of almost all the churches would give cause for serious consideration herein. There are, happily, plenty of noble and beautiful instances in Christian Hymnology where truth and spirituality are enshrined in poetry. But these are not by any means either the only or the most frequently employed hymns, in those services to which the men of to-day are most eagerly invited. Far too often the words put into the lips of congregations are such as do not bear thinking about. The modern case is sometimes only too analogous to the ancient one with which Paul dealt so plainly :—

If, therefore, the whole church be assembled together, and all speak with tongues, and there come in men unlearned or unbelieving, will they not say that you are mad ?

Certainly, if the Christianity of the future is to be larger as well as nobler than that of the past, its converts will have to be made from ‘the unlearned or unbelieving.’ But if they came, either to public worship or the study of the hymn-books in general use, they would find very much quite as meaningless as the unintelligible ‘tongues’ of old. What is really needed, and is even more necessary now than when the Apostle wrote it, is, as he says :—

I thank God I speak with tongues more than you all. Howbeit in the church I had rather speak five words with

my understanding—so as to instruct others also—than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue (1 Cor. xiv. 19).

It is probably no exaggeration to say that if a quarter of the hymns in every popular hymn-book were burnt, it would be unmeasured gain to Christian truth. And the careful revision even of the remainder would be no small contribution to that truthfulness in thought and speech which is one of the absolute conditions of any hope for the future of Christianity in the modern world.

(2) But even truth may be too narrowly considered. Breadth is sometimes as important and as necessary as depth or height. It is difficult to say exactly what is meant by 'broad' as against narrow theology, but the difference is real and influential. The oft-told story of the master-artist who wrote across a pupil's work, 'Amplius,' has application as inexpressible as manifest to much evangelical teaching. It relates equally to the doctrinal and the practical phases of Christian faith.

It cannot be said that Professor Seeley's reproach, above quoted, is as yet wholly removed. It is true that the furore of opposition which some ten years since was aroused by an alleged 'new theology' has died down. No doubt that outburst was both too explosive and unrestrained to be constructive or permanent. But it did usefully burst some bonds. What is known sometimes as 'looseness,' sometimes 'liberalism,' sometimes 'advanced views,' in Christian doctrine, is regarded with less vituperation, if not more sympathy, than heretofore. Many recent events and publications, besides the general broadening as well as deepening religious influences of the present calamitous War, show that obscurantism in the churches, both Anglican and Free, is fast becoming an anachronism. This generation has come to see that any expression of Christian truth which is 'cribbed, cabined, and confined' in dogmatic formulae, and burdened with damnatory clauses, is unworthy and unwarranted. The whole truth concerning God and the Universe is far too great to run with smooth completeness into any man-made channels. Truly 'There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in' any of our theologies.

As every healthy child must grow, so that the clothes which once fitted him so well become intolerable, so, as the world grows not only older but wiser, must allowance be made for those enlargements of vision and changes of conviction which are inseparable from the vast increase in knowledge of even the last half-century. There is to-day a reverent and noble agnosticism, as much higher and deeper and broader than that of Job, as his darkling trust was than that of his comforters. It is simply impossible that in the enormous sweep of complicated relations which real religion involves, the minds of men should be hammered into one religious groove. Nothing more absolutely contrary to the spirit of Christ could possibly be conceived, than the blasphemy of declaring to mankind at large, after the well-meant but futile attempt to define the Divine nature, which is called the 'Athanasian Creed,' that—

unless a man thus think of the Trinity, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.

No clerical sophistries can justify such a falsity. Nor can it be wondered at in the least, that the men of this day should absent themselves from the services of any church which clings to such antique delusions.

No better illustration of the broadening of view and enlargement of sympathy which is absolutely necessary, and which is in this case happily taking place, can be found than in the great work represented by Christian Foreign Missions. Its beginnings were as narrow-minded as sincere and devoted. All the heathen were said to be 'perishing,' i.e. being hopelessly lost hereafter, whilst all the forms of religion found in the greater Eastern nations were wholly corrupt, calling only for denunciation and extirpation. Such notions do not now constitute the missionary motive. The sympathy of Christian churches for distant lands where religions with little truth and woful error keep vast populations in darkness, was never so genuine or so generous as now. But it is based on a fuller knowledge of the facts, as well as on a better understanding of the reasons why all who avow their belief that Christ is the Light of the world, are bound in loyalty to Him and in the brotherly love which He commands, to do everything possible to make

Him and the inspirations of His Gospel known and appreciated throughout the world.

(3) The application of the 'amplius' principle to the specific items of Christian belief is coming under consideration in many quarters. Here let us mark another general requirement if, after the War, Christianity is to renew its youth. The modern atmosphere does not merely affect theology and demand the loosening of its swaddling-bands, but creates a different mental environment from that of any preceding age. It is as indefinable but as real as climate. Beyond variations in heat and moisture, it would be difficult to say why Scotland should be so much healthier than the Gold Coast. But no one questions it. Still less does any one living in a West African danger zone attempt to repeat the habits of living and clothing which were best in the Highlands. But the physical difference between these climes is no greater than the intellectual difference between, say, John Wesley's times and to-day. The notion that the 'standards' of Methodism, or of the Free Churches, must be precisely, in word and interpretation, now as in the eighteenth or even nineteenth century, is but one of the childish things which the Apostle declared that he 'put away' when he became a man. 'Trust-deeds' are doubtless of value, and may be necessary from a legal point of view. But regarded as attempts to cast Christian teaching into an iron mould which should never be capable of modification or enlargement or adaptation to later knowledge, they are but mischievous or even disastrous hindrances to the spread of the true Kingdom of Christ on earth. They are as useless for the purpose of preventing the influence of modern thought as the fastening down of the safety-valve of an engine's boiler would be to avoid an explosion. And they are as cruel in their mistaken zeal as the binding of the feet of poor little Chinese girls.

For it has to be borne in mind that whatever the churches do, or refuse to do, the anti-Christian elements in to-day's European environment have to be taken into account. The policy of churches generally, and of almost all Christian teachers and writers, is to ignore this element, or dismiss it with something like contempt for its insignificance. Such procedure is as foolishly dangerous as the policy of the ostrich

always was. The general assumption that the unbelief of this age is less extensive, and less harmful, because it is less violent than that of half a century ago, has no more truth or wisdom to recommend it than the suggestion that softening of the brain is a less deadly disease than a noisy cough. As a main subject for discussion, the situation may be left to other occasions. Here it must suffice to point out plainly these three matters for serious consideration.

(i.) Even if Continental Europe be dismissed from thought, this country is simply riddled with unbelief, in various forms and degrees. This fact is much more influential in keeping the people away both from the churches and from Christian convictions, than is acknowledged by the churches.

(ii.) The reasons for such an attitude of silent hesitancy, or of outspoken opposition, are drawn to an unmeasured extent from apparent contradictions between Christian beliefs and sanctions as usually 'proclaimed.' This applies especially to some sections of the Evangelical churches, which pride themselves on wholesale rejection of any 'new theology,' or of what is now known through modern educational methods to be the truth of history and of science.

(iii.) It is equally vain to deny the growth of this sentiment, or to imagine that it can be crushed by any authority, or to suppose that it can be met by merely reiterating the old dogmas with added emphasis. 'Modernism' has become a veritable *bête noire* to numbers of excellent people. It is a great pity. For only in some form of wise and true modernism is to be found the help and hope of Christian faith, in face of the mental atmosphere which is already about us and will assuredly be fresher and stronger when the War is over. Bracing air is always considered good for human constitutions. But it would be worse than foolish to bring any one from the Tropics to North Britain without some suitable change of clothing and of habits. The principle of wise adaptation is no less true in the spiritual than in the physical realm.

(4) Another way of expressing the situation with equal truth would be to say that, alike in pulpit and pew, there is very real need of a higher average of intelligence. No one doubts that there are some wise and brilliant preachers;

or that there are alert and earnest congregations. But it cannot be said with truth that this applies to the average. Rather—if without any cynicism or invidiousness the whole truth may be told on general lines—must it be sorrowfully affirmed that the greatest of all needs for the development of a living Christianity in the days to come, is such a better understanding of what Christ's Gospel really does mean to this age, as can only come from far greater competence to teach, in the pulpit, and corresponding willingness to learn, in the pew. For want of these, Christianity is now suffering to a lamentable extent, even as our soldiers on the field would suffer if they were badly led, and do suffer because they are not supplied with sufficient most modern ammunition.

(5) In laying stress upon the manifest need for a higher grade of intelligence throughout the churches, there must be no losing sight, even for a moment, of the supreme importance of character as a witness for the value of Christian faith. It is quite as necessary that there should be a higher grade of personal character, amongst professing Christians, as of intelligence. There need be no conflict whatever between mental and spiritual growth. Increase of knowledge ought ever to contribute to 'that higher-toned goodness which we call holiness.' Without knowledge, even good character may become grotesque or offensive. Without noble character, knowledge merely swells into noxious conceit. No one questions the goodness of Tolstoy, but his pivoting of Christ's whole Gospel upon the crass literal interpretation of 'Resist not evil' leads up to the endorsement of a Pacifism which would surrender to a mad nation the hegemony of the world; or, on the intenser scale of individual lives, would adjure every maiden, in Christ's name, to allow herself to be outraged by the first drunken brute that assaulted her. In all the sad chaos of to-day there is scarcely anything more lamentable than the spectacle of men and women of blameless character inflicting the deadliest wounds upon the very cause they profess more than all others to champion. The principle of non-resistance to evil, at the present crisis, carried out as literally and universally and unconditionally as they assert, would have enabled brutal militarism, longing for opportunity to let loose its secret preparedness, not only to ravage Europe

as it has done poor Belgium, but grind this country also under its ruthless heel. The very fact that to-day in sermons, booklets, newspapers, 'Pacifists' are at liberty to expound their sentiments, is due to the repudiation of them by brave soldiers and sailors. We owe the peace and safety and plentiful provisions of these realms, not to the assumed superior piety of Tolstoy's followers, but to those who—with not one whit less appreciation of the guilelessness of the dove—heed also Christ's admonition to be 'wise as serpents.' The Christianity which did not resist both evil things and evil men, would be no blessing but a curse to a world like this. Character, to be worthy, must involve the right use of knowledge. Whence also Christian character, to be the potent force which the world will soon so sorely need, must include the right understanding of Christian principles so that they, not pietism or fanaticism, may be known by experience, and exhibited in society.

(b) Granted such development of character based on better understanding, the next great coming need is that both principle and practice should be brought into more actual contact with the conditions of modern human living. When Christian churches have learned to appreciate the two Great Commands which both Christ Himself and the Apostle so strongly emphasized, as taking the place of a Decalogue and Levitical rites,¹ they will see how a l-penetrating and far-reaching are their consequences.

That a real and great change has come over Christian preaching and practice during the last half-century, no honest observer will deny. Nor is there any reason why he should. In spite of all the Jeremiads in which some Christian advocates occasionally indulge, the 'proclamation' of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is in our day truer, and worthier, and nearer to His spirit, than ever before. It is unmeasured gain, not loss, that pulpits say nothing now about 'eternal torments,' but a great deal about present distress, and sin, and sorrow. We hear little now about going to heaven, and much more about creating a heaven in the homes and cities all around us. There is,

¹ 'On these two hang all the law and the prophets.' 'There is no other command greater than these.' 'For this thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill; and if there be any other command, it is all summed up in this—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Love works no ill to his neighbour. Love, therefore, is the fulfilling of the law.'

happily, no need either to plead for 'Missions' and 'Institutional Churches,' or to describe their work. In almost all the great cities of our land, noble examples may be found of the ways in which Christian churches are doing the work of the Good Samaritan—both at home and abroad—under modern conditions. It is impossible to tabulate the numbers of men and women who have been by such means saved from suffering and sorrow and despair. Such work is its own justification and recommendation.

But in the difficult future which is awaiting us, it will not nearly meet the pressing need of the people, even when taken at its best and utmost. There is every reason, happily, to believe that philanthropic effort will increasingly become an essential part of the existence of every Christian Church. But in at least three respects there must be definite development in such practical recognition of human needs.

(i.) First of all, and most plainly, all apologies for associating social sympathy with spiritual zeal must cease. The notion of a Gospel so pure, and a faith so spiritual, that it leaves all social matters to be discussed and settled by men of no religion, has to be dismissed as utterly unworthy and unchristian. Whether wealthy and comfortable congregations like it or not, the actualities of our modern life, with all their darker accompaniments, will have to be continually borne in mind, and the greatest good of the greatest number taken as the ideal of communal life which all churches that are true to Jesus Christ should help to bring to pass.

(ii.) Again, there must be no shrinking from the comprehensiveness of such an ideal. The Gospel aims at nothing less than the 'salvation' of the whole man, body, soul, and spirit. It is, therefore, as far removed from mere 'soul saving,' as it is from being content with distribution of food and clothes. We are learning in these days as never before, both how many wants civilized human nature evinces, and how divinely justified is the democratic claim that the comforts, advantages, opportunities, and privileges thereby suggested, should not be confined to an aristocratic few, but be at least within the reach of every one. There ought no more to be a 'proletariat,' known as 'the masses,' and distinguished by their practical exclusion from any chance to share life's noblest

and highest delights—a 'submerged tenth' for whom little vision of enjoyment beyond eating and drinking is accessible—than there would still be permitted the old foul running of open drains through main streets, or patients suffering from infectious disease be suffered to roam at large throughout the community. The contentment which yet seems in some quarters to prevail, so long as the many are just kept from starvation, and permitted to look on at the advantages and enjoyments of the minority without any hope of sharing them, must be definitely understood and declared to be utterly unchristian, whatever politics or economics may think or say. Such application of high principles to daily life comes distinctly within the opportunity and duty of Christian churches, if they are either to gain the ear of the people who have to be considered when the War is past, or to be true to their Lord.

(iii.) A third feature of the ideal which they must keep before them, if Christ's Kingdom is yet to come, is holy discontent with all palliative measures for social needs, and unflinching effort, however indirect, to develop all curative means. Details as to what this involves may be stated elsewhere. Every one knows that it is not enough to pull down old city 'rookeries,' or eject tenants from insanitary dwellings. It is very far indeed from being sufficient, when we reclaim drunkards or provide rescue homes. There are social causes for half the miseries that Christian philanthropy seeks to relieve. It is useless to attempt to put out a fire upon which oil is continually being poured. Whatever be the strength and selfishness of 'vested interests,' the drink curse has to be strangled by sheer Christian persistence. Mere negations, however bold and firm, will never put an end to social evils. Not only drink, but gambling, lust, and greed, will continue to blight human lives and blast human homes, unless such positive measures as will cure them by prevention be constantly sought and earnestly pressed as definite part of the Christian Gospel. In so doing, i.e. in supporting every effort for the reduction or destruction of the drink traffic, in showing the utmost possible sympathy to all endeavours to provide healthy homes for artisans, and in helping all philanthropic schemes for saving the children, there need be neither underestimate nor neglect of that direct moral appeal to human personality

which is the prime normal function of every living Christian church. Christ's own words exactly express the situation: 'This ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.' It was never more than spiritual hyperbole to say to a Christian preacher, 'You have nothing to do but save souls.' Even as it would be an equal misrepresentation of his work, to make him a mere servant at philanthropic tables.

(7) In view of the ever-growing keenness of life's struggle, the inevitableness of much injustice and innocent suffering in the innumerable complications of modern civilization, together with the slowness of the social evolution which we see in progress, and the heritage of untold suffering which, for many a generation, the curse of this War must entail, the Gospel of the future, if it is to touch human hearts, will have to be more tenderly compassionate, more genuinely comforting, than it has ever yet been. Neither spiritually nor practically has Christian teaching thus far made the average man, or the great mass of jaded workers and strugglers, feel that it is to them a direct message from 'the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort.' Whatever exquisite deliverances may weekly proceed from cultured pulpits to refined audiences, it cannot be truly said that the ordinary efforts to reach 'outsiders' have been characterized by winsomeness. Nor has what Dr. Jowett so well called 'the wooing note,' been often heard in the appeals generally made to the man in the street. Canon Knox Little said once, and truly, that—

Take life as you will and when you will, what nine men out of ten want, want most bitterly, unless cynicism and evil have utterly degraded their natures and soured their hearts, is kindness and encouragement. And so the book which is truest to man's nature and needs, is full of the comfort of God.

But the average 'Gospel address' is, or has been, much more full of the denunciation of sin, if not redolent with threats of 'damnation,' than of the 'comfort of God.' Yet if Christ be credited with ability to make known His own Mission, nothing

can be clearer than His reply to the troubled messengers of their distressed master in prison :—

Go your way, and tell John the things which ye do hear and see. The blind are receiving their sight, the lame are walking, lepers are being cleansed, the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached to them. . . . Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I—will give you rest.

Every reader of his Greek Testament knows that the 'I' in these well-known words is emphatic. It is truly the Gospel in one letter. For it throws into vivid relief the supreme and God-intended distinction of the Christian faith, as against all others, that when rightly understood and represented, it is the Gospel of comfort. In every true and deep sense of the word, the world needs 'saving' to-day more than ever in its history. But that great and gracious end will never be answered in some presentations of avowed Christian doctrine; any more than it will in the Buddhism which is so often now extolled by those who want a religion; or by the Nietzscheanism which is set up against Christianity by those who want no religion. The root notion of the alleged comfort of Buddhism is escape by self-extinction. The master tone of Nietzsche's message is defiance of all by self-assertion. But the call of the Man of Nazareth is to comfort. Not indeed the comfort of the lotus-eaters, nor the Elysium of the cowardly, but the promise of justice for the oppressed, of solace for those who innocently mourn, of victory for the struggler in the great conflict 'twixt good and ill. 'In the world ye have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.' That is His world-call, and the response to it is found in all those who, in the very midst of their tribulation, are not content with the ideal of poor W. E. Henley :—

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods there be,
For my unconquerable soul;

but find a higher, nobler experience—'Nay, in all these things, we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us.' The main purpose of the Christian faith is to create a multitude which no man can number of such victors.

(8) There are those who think it necessary sometimes to protest against too soft a Gospel for these times, and who cast wistful glances backwards towards the hard days of the Puritans. In the main they are woefully mistaken. For in a world like ours—especially in this modern world—it is but cruel mockery to suggest that there may be too much love. There may well be too much sickly and shallow sentimentality, or too much of the sham which John so soundly condemned—'My little children, let us not love in word only, but in deed and in truth.' Of real love, from God to man, from man to his brother, there can never be too much. Can there ever be enough? The real need is to put aside the childish notion that love must always and only deal in sweets, that tender compassion has nothing to do but bind up wounds. We know better, physically. Some of us remember well that when we were wee bairns it was to us clear proof of hate, not love, that we had to be put to bed early, or taught lessons. The surgeon's tenderest compassion compels him sometimes to make the deepest wound. Only love could find heart to administer a medicine bitter enough for some diseases. But all this is true in regard to the real 'good tidings' which Christianity should bring. As it is most real compassion to cut out the roots of a cancer, rather than for false pity's sake remove only the surface, so is there just as actual room and need in any modern presentation of the Christian Gospel to include the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, as the fourteenth of John. It is a frightful reflection that out of the dreadful list of 'works of the flesh,' which Paul enumerated in his letter to the Galatians, not one can be said to be yet extinct, though nearly nineteen hundred years have rolled between. The modern anti-Christian cynic deems it a fine opportunity for sneering at Christian failure. Whereas a very little honesty should suffice to show that it is rather the most convincing plea on behalf of Christianity. What churches have done, or have not done, is quite irrelevant.

The question is, What would Christianity, as Christ and His Apostles expounded it, have done, if men had accepted and obeyed it? To that, there is but one answer. There would not have been one of these horrors left. That they are still with us and abound, is a satire upon the 'advanced' civilization which some are so strenuously labouring to set free from religion. It is all too apparent that such dire realities will not be extirpated by easy means, but will need all the severity which can attach to love when confronted by evil, to deal with them. The latest proof of this is only too apparent. The curse of strong drink is not in the least lessened by being hackneyed. That it is an unquestionable hindrance to a man's physical best, has been recently a confession wrung out of the national crisis. That it is the worst hindrance in civilization to the moral best of humanity, needs no demonstration.¹ So black is the outlook that this nation is called upon, for the sake of the best so tragically needed, to give up the evil which ensnares it. Science has proved, beyond all controversy, that alcohol is physically a delusion, worse than useless for bodily health. The King and many noblest citizens have agreed to illustrate science by doing without it altogether. The highest political authority in the land calls on the people to do the same. But no; oh, no; that cannot be. Why not? Let us away with all lying shuffles about 'liberty.' The plain truth is because of 'vested interests.' That is, because of the money represented by 'the trade.' So the statesman shrinks back cowering from his task, and whether health and life and national existence be sacrificed or not, intoxicating liquor must be supplied. The burning tickle at the throat, followed by giddiness in the head, which is all that it is good for, must go on to mar and blight and blast human characters and homes and destinies. Truly this is a case in which the churches are guilty. For they are not one, even here. However thankful we may be for improvement herein during the last half-century, it is not yet true that they speak with one voice, with all the severity of love, against that traffic which Mr. Gladstone, in his prime, declared openly, before the House of Commons, to be a 'worse

¹ It is not too much to say that Russia has been saved, in its present colossal struggle, by the banishment of vodka.

scourge than war and pestilence and famine combined.' To reply that it is by no means the only evil to be fought, is no answer at all. Fifty blacks never yet made white. All the modern forms of the ancient evils which the Apostle tabulated have yet to be overcome, and true as it is that his exhortation—'Let all you do be done in love'—is now more timely than ever, there is equal or even greater need that the rest of his appeal to Christian churches should be emphasized—'Abhor that which is evil. Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.' In the days that are coming upon us, love without severity will be but cruel mockery. One of the ablest of modern Christian prophets has said only too truly:—

When the War is over, I fear a horrible return to paganism in this country; something like the reaction of the Restoration after the Puritan domination. We may have to pay for the high mood which sustains our people now. And if we have to contemplate a prolonged impoverishment, a period of hardship and privation, it may be that a bitter, reckless temper will supervene which will be reflected in habits and conduct.

There is a spiritual peril in poverty and hardship quite as real as that which threatened us in the old luxurious, pleasure-loving days before war came. There was a wave of paganism flowing then, a mood of indulgence and sensual complacency from which this awful catastrophe has saved us; but a hard, selfish materialism may follow the exaltation of the national spirit when the danger is passed, and we have to face life again immeasurably poorer, and find the spacious, abundant existence of former times restricted and straitened.

For such times the churches will need men who can speak and act after the pattern of the letter to the Galatians, or the ideals of James, in the New Testament, quite as much as according to the Psalm of love addressed to the Corinthians, or the mellowed appeals of John's First Epistle.

(9) The writer just quoted goes on to say that as Christians we can only avoid the coming dangers

if the Church associates herself with a definite way of looking at life. We have lived through a great conspiracy against the Christian conception of life. Our business now is to make the Christian Gospel a challenge to all the reserves of the human soul, and to make men understand that faith is a very reasonable attitude for a bold man to take up. We have done with negatives. When we preach a faith that makes you big enough to stand up to this universe, a religion that costs you something to live, that makes you interested and eager about this absorbing business called life—then the Church will enter upon its greatest hour.¹

Such words are both true and weighty; but there is yet another element in the outlook upon the future which the churches, if they are faithful to Christ's Gospel, must endeavour to cultivate. All the more because no other body of men and women on earth have such reasons or incentives to inspire with hope as they have. 'We were saved by hope'—wrote Paul to the Romans. Later on in the same letter, with the whole Gentile world in full view, he added—'Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope in the power of the Holy Spirit.' The Gospel of Hope—if there is not some corresponding difference between the believer and the unbeliever, it will surely be impossible to demonstrate to thoughtful men the subjective worth or objective validity of the Christian faith. But in nothing more than this, ought it to be possible to justify Christ's Gospel. The extent to which hope is in the New Testament associated with faith, is generally quite overlooked. A whole catena of quotations might here be given to substantiate this. But one great word embraces them all, 'Faith is the assurance of things hoped for.' All the mistakenness in regard to Christ's immediate bodily return which we must acknowledge amongst the first believers, cannot blind us to the double assurance of hope which Christ's mission and message bring for humanity. Double, because certainly when we feel most the loss of loved ones, or think of life's tragic

¹ Dr. J. Hutton, of Glasgow, in the *Christian Commonwealth*.

brevity, we 'sorrow not even as the rest which have no hope.' Whilst it is in relation to our present doubts, and fears, and conflicts, that believers are bidden to 'rejoice in hope' as well as be 'patient in tribulation.' The value of hopefulness in every day's life needs no demonstration. We see and feel it everywhere. The general who can inspire his army with confidence has half won his battle. The doctor who can get his patient to be hopeful is far more likely to cure him than the sombre physician who only shakes his head and drops melancholy hints. There has never been a time, it may be safely said, in the history of either Church or world, when there was such call for the inspiration of hope as just now, whether as to the immediate or the farther future. As to the latter, and Christian eschatology, much has yet to be learned. For the moment, let us only consider the future of this country, and of Europe, when the hell-cloud lifts and another day begins to dawn. How threatening that morning is already with complicated problems, there are only too many witnesses. Says Canon Scott Holland :—

Every day, every week, new problems are being raised in industry and all about us, and they will remain with us accentuated after the War. We have got to refashion the whole of our industrial life. The men who have gone to fight for us are never coming back to the old conditions. Women's work, women's place, great distress, great industrial disasters, all the great problems of reorganizing our national life are before us. Will they find us unequipped as ever? Let us set to work now, and be thinking, thinking, thinking.

But unless we can think in a spirit of hopefulness, how will the blight of pessimism be prevented from settling down over all the land? Indeed, all over Europe some gospel of hope must be found, if the nations are to be saved from despair. The general situation is only too truly stated by Mr. Philip Gibbs in his poignant work, *The Soul of the War* :—

Have not our politicians and our teachers, with few exceptions, used all their influence to foster dark old

superstitions which lurk in such good words as 'patriotism' and 'honour,' to keep the people blind, so that they might not see the shining light of liberty, and to adulterate the doctrine of Christ which most of them profess, by a gospel of international jealousy based upon trade interests and commercial greed?

The military castes have been supported in Europe by putting the spell of old traditions upon simple people. The Christian churches have bolstered them up and failed utterly to preach the words of peace, because in the heart of the priest there is the patriot, so that every Christian nation claims God as a national asset leading its battalions.

There will be no hope of peace until the peoples of the world recognize their brotherhood, and refuse to be led to the shambles for mutual massacre.

If there is no hope of that; if, as some students of life hold, war will always happen, because life itself is a continual warfare, and one man lives only at the expense of another, then there is no hope, and all the ideals of men striving for the progress of mankind, all the dreams of poets, and the sacrifice of scientists, are utterly vain and foolish, and pious men should pray God to touch this planet with a star and end the folly of it all.

Such a reminder is not more sombre than true. Never is hope so much needed as after a great failure. Browning's ideal man was never so much tragically called for as now:—

One who always marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break;
Never dreamed though right were worsted, wrong would
triumph;
Held we fall to rise; are baffled to fight better;
Sleep to wake.

But where is he to be found? Or rather, how is he to be made? For he is wanted everywhere. This is the question

that Christian churches, above all else, ought to be able to answer. No nobler mission can be conceived than that of restoring the hope of humanity. In reply to all the sneers of unbelief, it is open to every believer to repeat—with shame maybe, but none the less with truth and hope—that Christianity has not failed, for it has never yet been tried. Civilization has failed, for it has been tried to the utmost. The very nation which has precipitated this hell upon earth boasts, above all other nations, of its 'advanced' civilization and superior knowledge. The ghastliness of its moral failure is the very nightmare of this dark hour. But when Christianity is tried, does not the ideal which Jesus Himself claimed to fulfil give this poor, sorrowing, suffering, struggling world the very hope for which it so heavily sighs?

Behold My servant whom I have chosen,
 My beloved One in whom My soul finds pleasure.
 I will put My spirit upon Him,
 And He will announce justice to the nations;
 He will not wrangle or create a disturbance,
 Nor will any one hear Him shouting in the streets.
 The crushed reed He will not break,
 Nor will He quench the smouldering wick
 Until He has led on justice to victory,
 And in His name shall the nations hope.

(Matt. xii. 18-21.)

Let that be translated into modern terms, and it becomes a Gospel in very deed. It is a message which bids us hope that even yet, out of Europe's welter of blood and woe, there may 'come a new world wherein a kingdom of God which is goodness and peace and joy' shall prevail, and unite under its beneficent rule all other kingdoms on earth.

(10) Yet there is one thing more that has to be made clear and emphatic above all the rest. Especially because it is so often beclouded with pious sophisms, as well as made the target for the strongest animadversions of unbelief. When all that a living Christianity involves is considered, and all the good for humanity which its realization would

undoubtedly bring, is fairly estimated, the question cannot but arise, Is all this merely a mocking mirage of religious delusion, a counsel of perfection which can never be realized, or does it come within reasonable bounds of possibility? If the latter, as will, of course, here be assumed, then how is it to be accomplished? The usual answer, and that which is generally regarded as the ultimate expression of devout faith, is that the Church must 'wait upon God.' By this, however, is not merely meant that Christian people should be more earnest in prayer, but that in the final issue all is in God's hands, and upon Him, in the last resort, every event must depend. It is quite unnecessary to multiply quotations to show what is almost universally said, and sung, and preached, and prayed hereupon. The Anglican Prayer-book quite unhesitatingly asserts this :—

'We are taught by Thy holy Word, that the hearts of kings are in Thy rule and governance, and that Thou dost dispose and turn them as it seemeth best to Thy godly wisdom.'

'God whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth.'

'Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men.'

'Eternal God, our heavenly Father, who alone makest men to be of one mind in a house, and stillest the outrage of a violent and unruly people.'

Religious journalism is well represented by the Free Church weekly which lately printed :—

O Thou by whom the thoughts and deeds of men are weighed,

Who hast withheld from us the peace for which we prayed (!)

Whilst the sincere and able writers who are issuing 'Papers for War-time' through the Oxford University Press, close their statement of the convictions which they desire to

promulgate by the bald avowal—' (8) That with God all things are possible.' As no note of explanation accompanies this last phrase, it seems inevitable to take it as generally accepted—in the sense of meaning that 'to God all things are possible'—i.e. as a categorical assertion of divine omnipotence.¹

Yet the uselessness, and indeed falsity, of this reference, may be shown from the very manifesto itself whence we here quote it. Article No. 5 in the same statement says plainly 'That Christians are bound to recognize the insufficiency of mere compulsion for overcoming evil.' Which is utterly true. Yet this is the very thing which is ascribed to and expected from God, as the final settlement of all the evils associated with war! It is strange indeed, and woful too, that so many excellent people do not see that in this unqualified appeal to omnipotence, they are not only philosophically false, but religiously blaspheming. The former, because such an appeal to omnipotence involves a double fallacy. (1) The suggestion that a moral being can be compelled—which is really a contradiction in terms, seeing that to be a moral being a man must in some real measure be free, and compelled freedom is unthinkable. (2) The assumption that moral evil can be overcome or prevented by force—for omnipotence can, in this case, only stand for resistless force. Then, too, the latter, because it implies that if God chose, He could prevent or end all wars. Whence it would follow that the whole responsibility for the awful carnage and misery of the last ten months rested upon Him—to say nothing of all history's gruesome record. If so, then

¹ In all probability it is printed as a quotation from Matt. xix. 26. But a moment's fair study both of the Greek and the context of that passage suffices to show that it is a misquotation. The bald assertion of divine omnipotence on the part of Christ, in answer to the troubled astonishment of the apostles, would have been no reply at all. As for the significance of the preposition *παρά*, it may best be learned by comparison with its other occurrences with the Dative case in the New Testament. One only may here be cited. In 1 Cor. vii. 24, 'Brethren, let each man wherein he was called therein abide with God.' Here the same preposition carries even in the English of the Revised Version an unambiguous meaning. But Dr. Weymouth renders it more impressively, 'There, brethren, let him still stand, close to God.' Whilst the *Twentieth-Century New Testament* yet more expressively puts it, 'Let every one remain in the condition in which he was when he was called, in close communion with God.' This being the true sense also in the phrase quoted from Matthew, it is time that it ceased to be employed falsely, as a reference to divine omnipotence.

upon Him also must rest similar responsibility for *all* the wars, and *all* the evils, that have ever afflicted the human race. If that were so, then the most virulent unbelief would be justified, and the Governor of the universe would be but an infinite monster. No religion or philosophy on earth has had such reason as Christianity to cry, 'Save me from my friends.' Real Christianity has nothing to fear from its enemies; but if some of its friends were taken seriously, it could not last a year. At the present grave crisis in religious not less than political unsettlement, nothing is more needed alike for the sake of God and man, than a plain understanding and unequivocal statement of human, as distinct from divine, power and responsibility. The case may well be illustrated—not for the first time—by reference to the two versions of the English Bible in their rendering of a passage in the Acts. There at chapter iii. 19 the older version makes the apostles say:—

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, *when the times of refreshing shall come* from the presence of the Lord.

No phrase in human speech could more truly or fully express what the nations of Europe, and indeed the world, will need when the signing of peace stops the present inferno. But how are these 'times of refreshing' to be brought about? The verse above cited manifestly implies that they are wholly the gift of God, and that our human part is simply to wait for them so to come. But that assuredly is not what Christ Himself and His apostles taught. Nor is it what was really said on the occasion referred to. If it were not for the unwarranted prejudice against the Revised Version which even yet obtains in some quarters, the people would long since have learned that their appeal was rather this:—

Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that *so there may come* seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.¹

¹ Or, as the *Twentieth-Century New Testament* felicitously renders it, 'Repent and turn, that your sins may be wiped away, so that happier times may come from the Lord Himself.'

And from this, two things emerge so clearly as to be unmistakable. First, that the 'happier times' are not waiting at all for God, but for men. And secondly, that in the human part for which the 'refreshing' waits, the essential element is repentance with a view to the removal of sins. The difference between the two statements is vast enough to set all Christendom thinking. Clever unbelievers are sneering—*suo more*—at 'the apologies of the clergy' for the War. They are said to be 'superficial, contradictory, and vapid.' There is some truth in the indictment, though the cynical conceit in which it is framed repels all fair-minded readers. Setting aside the virulence which does not merit reply, the accusation may be of service in that it will apply equally to the holy war which has to be waged presently, when this wicked War is over. From such keen scrutiny and plain speaking, the churches may learn much to their advantage. In regard to the present calamity and the utterances of 'preachers who may be trusted to put the Christian feeling in its most persuasive form,' we are told that—

One thinks that God sent the War ; another attributes it to German rebels against God. One regards it as a spiritual agency devised for our good ; another says that it is an unmitigated calamity sent for our punishment. One sees in it the failure of Christianity ; others find in it precisely a confirmation of Christian teaching. Some think it will draw men to God ; others that it will drive men from God. Unity perhaps we cannot expect ; but the empty rhetoric and utter sophistry of most of these utterances reveal the complete lack of defence. On the main indictment of the Christian Church, its failure to have condemned and removed militarism long ago, all are silent ; or the one preacher who notices it can only dejectedly confess that it is true.

It would be good for some preachers to be made to think on these lines, and to speak honestly when they have thought clearly. But there is no real need for either the contradiction or the confusion which are thus stigmatized. The whole

true Christian doctrine is sufficiently and for ever expressed in Paul's appeal to the Philippians :—

So then, my dear friends, as you always did listen to me, now that I am absent from you, even more than when I am with you, work out thoroughly your own salvation, with all anxious care ; for it is God Himself who is moving you within, because He yearns over you, both to resolve and to carry out your resolutions (ii. 12, 13).

The whole Bible testifies to the co-operation here so forcefully averred between the will of man and the will of God. Never, even in the Old Testament, let alone the New, does the Bible descend to the degrading doctrine which, whether it be called Calvinism or Determinism, would rob man of his manhood and put the onus of all ill upon God. It may suit some modern tastes when Mark Twain writes—from the grave, for he was apparently ashamed to publish it whilst living, as well he might be—that ‘ man is a machine and nothing more.’ Or when the Editor of the *Clarion* affirms that ‘ man cannot help, and so is not answerable for, anything he does.’ But true philosophy joins with common sense, and experience, and the Bible, to give the lie to such misleading and humiliating vapourings. If we quote once more from Mr. Henley—all the more because he was no Christian—

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll ;
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.

That captaincy remains wherever man remains, in spite of all the assertions of some modern teachers who shamelessly avow that—

Universal determinism being scientific truth, it follows that moral responsibility does not exist. It cannot be conceived. It is in fact contrary to human reason to consider automatons responsible, being inevitably obliged

to be as they are. General irresponsibility, such is scientific truth.¹

Such philosophical piffle and moral suicide may be left to those who like them. But it is high time that Christianity bade final farewell to Augustine, and Calvin, and Puritanism, herein, and fairly, as well as reverently, faced the inalienable burden of responsibility which must rest on human nature, until evolution is reversed and the Psalmist's warning is justified—'Man that is in honour, and understands not, is like the beasts that perish.'

Theologians and humble-minded believers have alike been too much obsessed by the notion of the 'divine sovereignty,' and have been thus awed into an untrue and unhealthy self-despising. Hymns, as above hinted, have perpetuated the mischief.

What shall we offer our good Lord,
Poor nothings, for His boundless grace?

is as false to His will concerning us, as intolerable in the aspersions which ultimately it casts upon the divine character. No poetical licence can justify such abjectness. If men are 'nothings,' God is literally ALL; and in face of the whole tragedy of this world's sin and woe, a malignant Pantheism, or a revolting Theism, is all that is left us instead of the Father of whom Jesus speaks. No father can make his children good, however much he may desire to do so. In every happy home the harmony does not depend upon the father alone, but also upon the behaviour of the children. If instead of loving and helping each other, they fight and maim each other, whilst extolling their father's character, no sophistry can put upon him the responsibility for the ensuing inferno. So too now, in regard to all the potent influences for good which will be so immeasurably needed presently, when the holy war succeeds the wicked war, it is quite as possible, from the Christian standpoint, to have too much as too little prayer. Prayer, as an easy substitute for the cost of decision and the pain of action, is but a delusion and a snare. It is strange

¹ *Illusion of Freewill*, Professor A. Hamon, p. 134.

but true that the lesson which almost more than any other Christian churches have to learn, if they would faithfully face the future, is right nobly expressed by the greatest English unbeliever in the nineteenth century, viz. John Stuart Mill. At the close of his anti-Christian essays on Theism we find him frankly saying :—

To the other inducements for cultivating a religious devotion to the welfare of our fellow creatures as an obligatory limit to every selfish aim, and an end for the direct promotion of which no sacrifice can be too great, it superadds religion—the feeling that in making this the rule of our life, we may be co-operating with the unseen Being to whom we owe all that is enjoyable in life. One elevated feeling this form of religious idea admits of—which is not open to those who believe in the omnipotence of the good principle in the universe—is the feeling of helping God, of requiting the good He has given, by a voluntary co-operation which He, not being omnipotent, really needs, and by which a somewhat nearer approach may be made to the fulfilment of His purposes.¹

The alarm of the ordinary believer at the words ‘not being omnipotent’ is quite unnecessary. It only involves the laying aside of the usual foolish and false conception that omnipotence means ‘the power to do anything.’ Which is absurd, for omnipotence can never rationally be called upon to make a round square, or a hollow solid. No more can it be called upon to make men good, i.e. to prevent, or to end, any war. Made goodness is simply unthinkable. So is the ending or preventing of moral evil by force. The limitation of omnipotence is as easy as solemn to contemplate. For from the Christian standpoint, which is fully supported from history, observation, and experience, men are persons, not things, moral agents, not machines. And if their nature is due to God—no matter how—their measure of freedom as self-willing personalities represents the self-limitation of the omnipotence which brought them into being. That is the sense, though Mill did not acknowledge it, in which God is not omnipotent.

¹ *Three Essays on Religion* (Cheap Edition), p. 107.

It is quite real enough to warrant the appeal of the philosopher of necessitarianism. He was inconsistent, but Christians should not be, in emphasizing God's need of man's help. Never in all history has there been more pressing need for such a lesson than now. In the midst of our agonies of mind and bewilderment of heart, we pine for peace. But we know too well that when it comes, it will bring us a fearful possibility of evils even worse than war. 'What shall we do to be saved?' becomes a modern cry quite as intense as on the Day of Pentecost, quite as full of alarm as when the Israelites raved at Moses because of the Red Sea in front of them and Pharaoh's host behind them. No words can put the truth for modern Christian ears more clearly than those recorded concerning that ancient crisis:—

And the Lord said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto Me? Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward (Exod. xiv. 15).

Whatever interpretation be put to-day upon the significance of the lifting of the rod of Moses, the command to 'go forward' instead of merely crying to God, is too plain to admit of any possible mistake. It embodies one of the divine principles in the Old Testament which is not merely perpetuated but emphasized in the New. It is not too much to say that upon the appreciation of this principle of co-operation, which puts the burden of responsibility in human affairs on men, rather than upon God, depends the Christianity of the coming age.

If we revert for a moment to the variety of religious opinions concerning present European horrors, it is evident, apart from the ill-natured gibes of some unbelievers, that there is lamentable need of something like unity in main principle, whatever allowance be made for difference of temperament and position. A few 'foundations' ought to stand firm, however varied the structures built upon them. Here, at least, we must make bold to say, is one. This vile waste of everything that is most precious in human life was assuredly never sent by God. It needs no divine caprice to account for it. The plainest principle is the truest.

Be not deceived, God is not mocked. Whatever a man sows, that will he also reap. He who sows to his lower nature, will of that nature reap corruption (Gal. vi. 7).

National life only exhibits this natural moral consequence on a larger scale. For years, for generations past, not in Germany alone—though most wrongly and mischievously there—the sowing of the evil weeds of greed, and pride, and lust of power, has been going on. No nation is guiltless. But—to change the figure—we believe that Britain's greatest comfort in this black hour is that we certainly did not put the match to the dire explosion of 1914. Perhaps it may be also true that our contribution to the state of unstable equilibrium which permitted it was only such as was forced upon us.

But whatever the contribution of any nation, the avalanche has been pulled down by human nature upon itself. It has not been rolled down upon innocent sufferers by the providence of God. Providence is no more responsible for the hell let loose in Europe, than for the pitiful murder of the three brides in their baths, as recently related with ghastly detail by the daily press. For that, and all such crimes, the murderer is rightly held responsible. The modern pseudo-determinism which repudiates responsibility cannot be practised. On the larger scale the same principle holds equally good. The passions of men, and not the will of God, have cursed Europe during these cruel months. The usual rejoinder of unfaith, that at least God permitted it, is quite irrelevant. Man being what he is, God could not do other than permit it. Until it is shown that men are things, not persons, chattels, not moral beings—and then it will be sheer waste of time and energy to show anything—evil can no more be prevented than good can be compelled. When thoughtless worshippers sing—

When wilt *Thou* save the people,
O God of Mercy, when ?

or when they pray—

Jesus calls us ; by Thy mercies,
Saviour, *make* us hear Thy call,

it is but regrettable proof of unreality in some Christian petitions. If what is here asked for had been possible, the love of God in Jesus Christ would have accomplished it from the beginning. Calvary would have been prevented, and the Jewish mob turned into saints.

The utmost that can be done with moral beings, as with our children, is to make appeal to them for decision and action. This, in the gospel of Jesus, God has done to the uttermost possible on His part. But in the unsolved and insoluble mystery of the self-determination which characterizes human nature, there is yet both room and need for that helping of the divine which J. S. Mill so strangely yet truly emphasized. That, in ten thousand ways, is the task of the churches when every opportunity arrives. It is for that, and not a heaven-poured 'revival,' that the 'happier times' will have to wait. That is the truth contained in the pregnant words of the apostles—'That your sins may be blotted out.' What sins? Is British Christendom in danger of being swamped by drink, or greed, or lust, or pride, or murder? Probably not. Certainly not in their grosser forms. The sins that call for repentance are those of omission, rather than of commission. 'To him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin,' says the practical Apostle, whose plain speech is corroborated alike by Paul and John. The leakage and the danger of modern Christianity is not in what Christians are doing, but in what they are not doing. In so saying, there is neither pessimistic cynicism, nor unfair underrating of the Christian service which many are rendering. But the motto for every regiment at the front, as well as on every British ship, is—'England expects EVERY MAN to do his duty.' We are proud to believe, as a nation, that it is done by every man. But it is not done in the churches. There, the few have to try to do what only the many could, or can, do. So much is waiting to be done, in so many ways, if Christ is to supersede Nietzsche in civilization, that it can only be accomplished when 'every one who bears the name of Christ' not only departs from iniquity, but fulfils the Master's will, so far as is possible to him, throughout his whole environment. For that, more than any spiritual 'outpouring,' the salvation of modern Europe will wait. It depends not upon God, but upon men.

VI

EPILOGUE

However imperfect the foregoing delineation, it will serve its purpose if it draws attention to the remarkable analogy between the present position of the Christian Church and the British nation, with a view to the betterment of both. In regard to the political and military situation, once more be it said, the people of these realms do not even yet fully appreciate the gravity of the case. The idea that we were just intervening to protect a weaker nation from injustice has long since passed away. Month by month the conviction has been forced upon us that the issues at stake are vaster, by far, than we had imagined. Week by week the long-preparedness and latent savagery of Prussianized Germany, under the influence of Bismarck, Nietzsche, Treitschke, Bernhardi, and the too well-known rest, have been ever more luridly exhibited. The alarming fact now stares us in the face that we are not merely contending even for our continued existence as an Empire. Our fate, along with that of our Allies, is inseparably bound up with the question whether, throughout civilization, truth and honour, liberty and morality, are to prevail; or brute force, kindled to madness by the boundless conceits of a strong nation, misled by its self-deceived teachers and arrogant war-lords, cajoled into taking for true the double falsehood that they are simply defending their Fatherland, and that God—the Christian God!—is with them. All that is worthiest in humanity's best ideals has never been in such peril before. Yet our Allies, no less than ourselves, are confident of victory in the end, be the cost now what it may. And all are equally agreed that the cost will be so great that the very utmost effort possible on each nation's part, even to the point of pain and sacrifice, is absolutely necessary, if united right is to triumph over colossal wrong.

Now all this is true of Christianity and its holy warfare against everything that defiles and debases mankind. Modern civilization has thrown up into vivid prominence the ancient battle-cry :—

For ours is not a conflict with mere flesh and blood, but with the despotisms, the empires, the forces, that control and govern this dark world—the spiritual hosts of evil arrayed against us in the heavenly warfare.¹

Even Christianity's bitterest opponents are compelled to own that if Europe had been Christian, there would have been no war. Whence it might well be inferred that if Europe could be made Christian, there would be no more war—to say nothing of all other evils which then would cease to be. But the very suggestion of such a thing is staggering.

It is easy and popular in public meetings to avow an 'incurable optimism,' and it may serve to rouse enthusiasm. But if we seriously think of Europe, even apart from the War, does a trip to the Continent suggest that the nations are really becoming Christian? The present fearful conflict only reveals the non-Christian undercurrent which was everywhere present and potent beforehand.

The hindrances to genuine Christian living, we know too well, are manifold. They may, however, be grouped into four: personal, theological, ecclesiastical, practical. Of the first and last of these we will here say little, leaving them to other occasions. But the theological and ecclesiastical cannot be dismissed without a closing word, because unity in holy purpose is now quite as necessary for Christianity as for the Allied Armies. It has been well said by Dean Wilson that this War 'must either unite the churches or doom them.' But how can real unity be attained, seeing that, with equal sincerity and intelligence, Christian believers differ so widely in their convictions? When one thinks unflinchingly of the actuality and strength of the dividing lines between the Greek and Roman Churches; between the Roman and Anglican; between the High, Low, and Broad Schools in the Anglican Church; between that influential body of Christians and the Free Churches,—any such unity as shall impress

¹ Eph. vi. 12 (Weymouth).

and move the world seems a merely vapid counsel of perfection. Can anything be suggested to help on its realization? Two things may at least be mentioned.

(i.) The modern world will be entirely warranted in asking Christian churches, as a point-blank question, whether they accept what Paul asserted with such unmeasured emphasis, viz. that without love, all else—literally and actually ALL else—is ‘nothing’? If they do not, where is their Christianity? If they do, where is their proof of it?

(ii.) There is need also for the unequivocal enunciation of three plain principles in regard to theology and church government. (1) At best and utmost, these are both only a means to an end, and that end is Christian character. Unless they issue in the ‘extra’ character which alone deserves to be called Christian, they are but as useless mockeries, as would be all the electric-light wires over a palace without any current passing through them. (2) They are both sacredly optional, and unmistakably included in the Apostolic dictum—

Let us no longer, therefore, pass judgement upon each other, but rather decide upon this, not to put in any brother’s way that which would hinder or trouble him.

(3) They are both human productions, and therefore, as such, definitely open to and calling for continual improvement. No living church can, with fidelity to Christian principles, be held in the grip of a dead hand. Pure-hearted and noble-minded believers from Paul to Wesley—including Augustine, Luther, Calvin, and others—have given their wisest and best to Christian service; but some of the most Christlike work during modern times has only been done by transcending their doctrines and changing their ideals. ‘Orthodoxy’ is, indeed, a mere term of convenience. What is orthodox to one man is heterodox to another; and there is no one to judge between them. The standpoint, for instance, of these pages is that of a reasonably broad ‘evangelical’ theology. And we who hold it are quite prepared to give reasons for thinking that it comes nearest to all that is true about Jesus and His gospel. But well we know that Greek and Roman and Anglican theologians would be ready to say

and do the same. They would be quite within their rights in so doing. Who, then, is to decide when teachers disagree? In this case it would seem as if there is nothing left us but Christ's own test, viz. fruit. 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' Whatever becomes of creeds and standards, the man whose personal character is truest to Christ is nearest to His heart. Whether Episcopacy or Presbyterianism be most warranted by antiquity, is a trifle compared with the query—Which church is doing most to bless and save, to help and comfort, mankind? To 'preach Christ' is not just to sing or talk about Him, but to be true to Him in personal character, and then by the aggregation of such characters to create a force which shall in all human affairs seek to 'overcome evil with good.' The present crisis is giving to our nation and empire such an opportunity as has never come to it before. The cost is awful in very deed. But the results may be commensurate. To get rid once and for all of the curse of militarism; to roll back to the jungle whence it came the brute maxim that might makes right; to free the poor, pitiable slaves of tyranny, alike in mid-Europe and on the Dark Continent; to purify a great nation from long-growing diseases of pride and conceit; to deliver real Christianity from the cramping hand of an utterly unchristian statecraft—these are rewards which may well be only earned by exhausting effort.

Nor is it otherwise in regard to the mission of Christianity in this our world. The present immeasurable upheaval, like a direful earthquake, is but the expression of mighty forces which have long been accumulating pent-up strength. The one thing which alone it seems safe to prophesy just now is that Europe, aye, and the world, will never be quite the same after this War as it was before. Assuredly that applies to religion, as truly as to politics. There is before the Christian Church to-day—the true Catholic Church, composed of all genuine disciples of Jesus Christ—an unprecedented opportunity to do what has to be done in those lands where cities are overthrown by earth-shocks. They build again. But they build better. There is unmeasured room for Christendom to emulate such an example. Many human powers have had to be, and have yet to be, overthrown, before Christ's Kingdom can prevail amongst men. 'We are engaged in a great modern fight, and

we are being beaten,' said an earnest speaker at a recent Christian Conference. Surely the measure of truth in such an estimate should be to the churches what it would be, we know, to our brave brothers on the battle-fields of France or Belgium. 'Baffled to fight better,' says our great Christian poet. Wherein? In such respects as these. Christianity, as represented by its adherents, must learn to set higher value upon TRUTH, whatever becomes of tradition. It must lay ever greater stress upon CHARACTER, whatever be the fluctuations of creeds. It must insist upon more ACTUAL OBEDIENCE to the law of Christ, and pay less heed to the conventions of society or the customs of a non-Christian civilization.

Above all the hellish roar of the conflict which still racks our nerves, the words of Mr. William Watson ring out with clarion call that cannot be silenced :—

Here, while the tide of conquest rolls
 Against the distant golden shore,
 The starved and stunted human souls
 Are with us more and more.

Vain is your science, vain your art,
 Your triumphs and your glories vain,
 To feed the hunger of their heart
 And famine of their brain.

Your savage deserts howling near,
 Your wastes of ignorance, vice, and shame,
 Is there no room for victories here,
 No fields for meeds of fame?

Whatever else is doubtful in regard to Christian beliefs, this at least stands out unmistakable and unequivocal, as long as the name of Jesus is worthy of any mention at all—'God did not send His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.' In the language of to-day—as witnessed by all New Testament principles—such a great assurance means that Jesus came to bring about the greatest blessing of the greatest number. Compared with that divine purpose, all else is but secondary. Its fulfilment, alas, seems at present to be almost invisible for

the distance. Yet for all except the incurable pessimist, or the impossible pietist, there can be no doubt that the human race is evolving upwards. No argument is needed in proof of such an estimate, beyond the comparison of 1915 with 1815. He who would prefer the latter should be led to an asylum. There are many mighty forces working for good, and the question put by unbelief is quite fair, viz. whether the indubitable improvement is due to Christian influences or to mere humanitarian development? It is not so easily disposed of as some of those, on either side, who are given to waving their hands magisterially, imagine. But its fair discussion must be left to other occasions.

So then, in conclusion, the summary of all that these pages most desire to emphasize may be put into a sentence. If Christianity is to endure, let alone to prevail on the world-wide scale, when the present all-engrossing conflict comes to the belated end for which we pray, it will have to prove to modern humanity that its Founder was right when He said, 'Ye are the salt of the earth.' The severe warning which He Himself appended to that ideal need not discourage any, even the humblest, real disciple. For as surely as the forces of nature by which we live are ever working for our good by means of infinitesimals, so in His spiritual Kingdom has Christ assured us that the least atom of reality, in the humblest life, will contribute to the saving of the world.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven which a woman took, and buried it in three measures of meal, until the whole mass was leavened.

And whoever shall give to one of these little children merely a cup of cold water for a disciple's sake, I tell you solemnly he will certainly not miss his reward.

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